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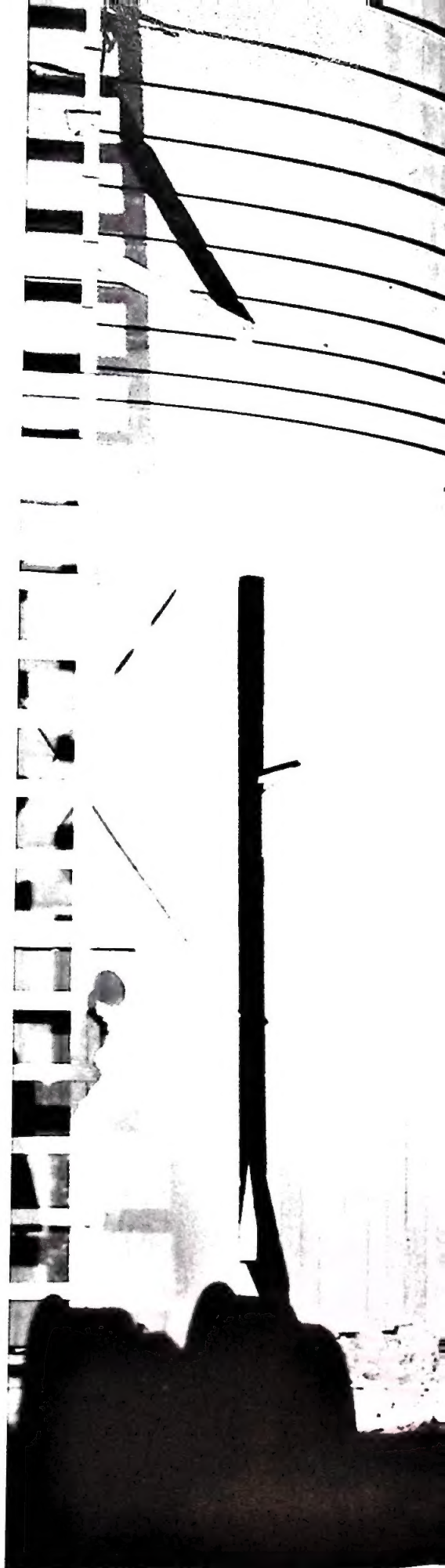
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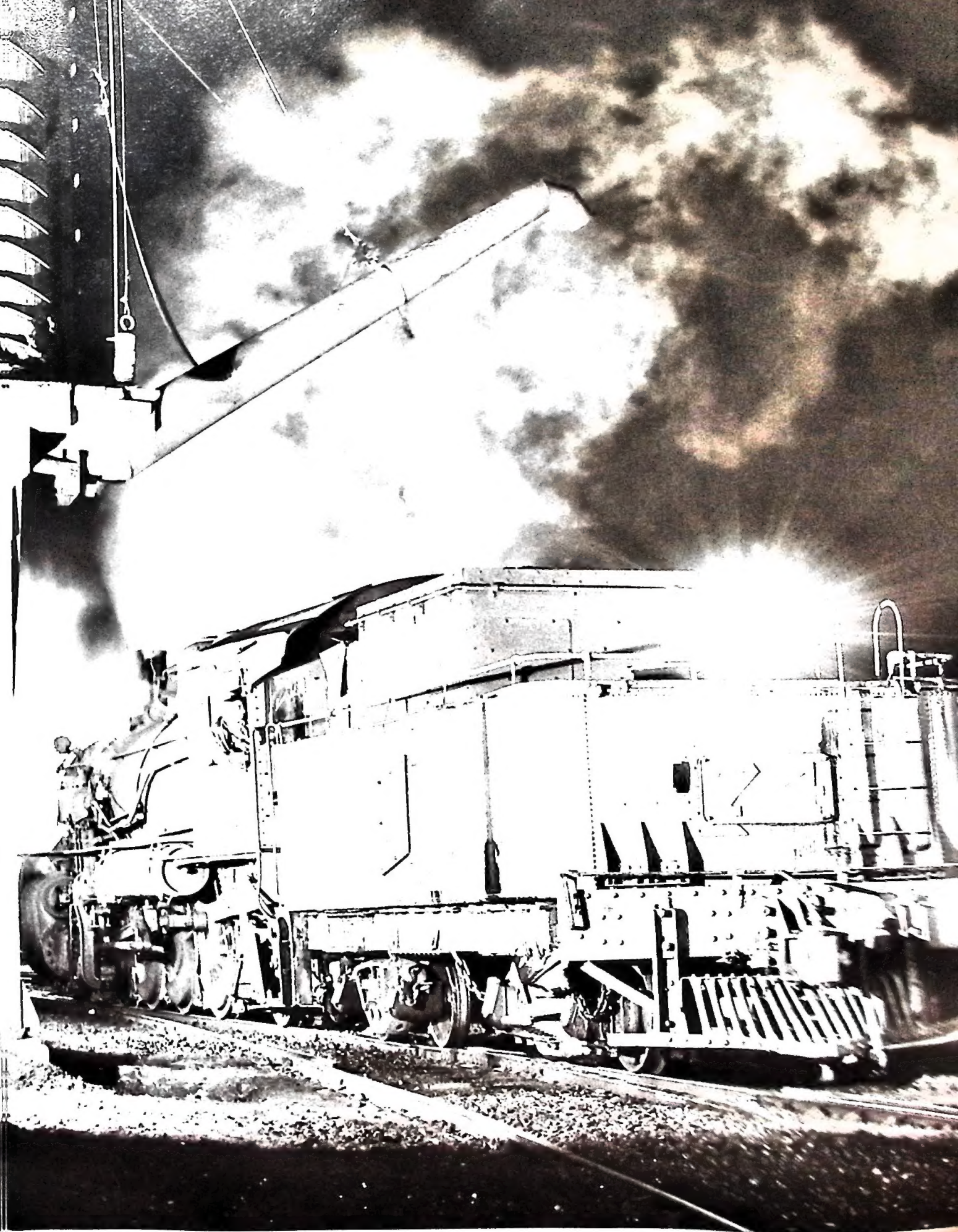
ClassicTrains

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF RAILROADING

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ABOVE: Sydney & Louisburg 2-8-2 74, a 1912 Baldwin of Tennessee, Alabama & Georgia ancestry, stands at Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, in a 1960 Jim Shaughnessy photo (P)

Our witnesses to history

FOR MANY READERS of this magazine, and me, the best parts of the golden years of railroading lie tantalizingly beyond memory. Whether you came to know railroading on the eve of Amtrak, at the end of the steam era, or back when streamliners were displacing heavyweight cars, many of us share the feeling that the really good stuff happened just before our time.

Thus we really can't be grateful enough to those who *were* there, and who have shared the memories and images of what they experienced. Where would we be without the photographs of a Don Wood, or the paintings, informed by first-hand encounters, of a Gil Reid? Don and Gil are established "names," of course, but we at CLASSIC TRAINS also delight in receiving submissions from folks we haven't heard of, like Les Clark ["Hot Train and the Value

of a Dollar," page 58]. It's with this in mind that we present the "Great Photographers" series in each issue [page 44], and it's why we've added a "Contribu-

tors" section [page 8] as a means of spotlighting the people who help us understand the past.

These grand men, and women, are our witnesses to history. With respect to our ability to glimpse railroading's fascinating heritage, we owe everything to them.

Robert S. McGonigal

Artist Gil Reid (left) and photographer Don Wood recall the steam era at a recent PRR society gathering.



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Contributors

James B. Armstrong ["Canadian National's Narrow-Gauge Kingdom," pages 74-83] discovered the lure of Canadian railroading 30 years ago. Riding passenger, mixed, and freight trains, he traveled as far west as Prince Rupert, B.C., and as far north as Hay River, N.W.T. A native of New York City, he has worked in book publishing ever since leaving the *Official Guide*. This is his first *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline.

Les Clark ["Hot Train and the Value of a Dollar," pages 58-61] is a former instructor for General Motors' Product Service Training Division; he retired from GM in 1991. He was born and spent his youth in Glens Ferry, Idaho. Les attended Idaho State College and was a fireman for the Union Pacific 1953-65. He has four daughters and now lives near Forestville, Texas, with his wife of 22 years. This is his first *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline.



Mallory Hope Ferrell ["A Bit of Flair in the Coalfields," pages 14-18] was an Air Force pilot during the Vietnam conflict, after which he had a 30-year career as an international captain for Delta Air Lines. He is the author of numerous books and articles, many on logging and narrow-gauge subjects. His "Going Out in Glory" appeared in our Spring 2000 issue. Mal and his wife, Gloria, live in rural Peachtree City, Ga.

H. Roger Grant ["Celebrating a Century," pages 68-73], Chair and Professor of History at Clemson University in South Carolina, is the author of 20 books, more than a dozen of which are on transportation topics. His latest work is *Ohio on the Move, Transportation in the Buckeye State* (Ohio University Press, 2000). A native of Albia, Iowa, he holds graduate degrees from the University of Missouri and is currently writing a social history of American railroads. This is his first *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline.

John Gruber ["Jim Shaughnessy: Self-Taught Master," pages 44-55] is contributing editor of *CLASSIC TRAINS*; he handles our "Great Photographers" series, which appears in each issue. A veteran contributor to our sister magazine, *TRAINS*, he was editor of *Vintage Rails* 1995-99. John is president of the Center for Railroad Photography & Art.

Les Hammer ["Thrills and Chills on the Milwaukee Road!" pages 32-39] is a former broadcaster and reporter who lives in Pasadena, Calif. He has written for *American Fencing*, *Ballet Review*, *Hollywood Bowl*, *S•P Trainline*, and other publications; this is his first *CLASSIC TRAINS* byline. He is grateful for the assistance of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, Joseph August Jr., Rudy Behlmer, *Eddie Brandt's Saturday Matinee*, Glendale Public Library, Los Angeles Public Library, Miles City Public Library, Miles City Star, Milwaukee Public Library, Museum of Modern Art, Jim Scribbins, Frank Stevenson, John Stilgoe, and UCLA Special Collections.

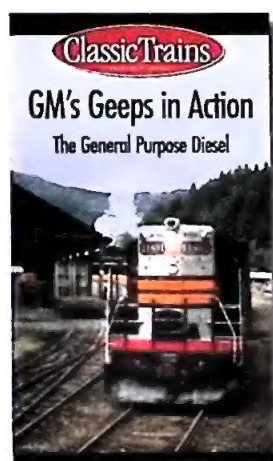
J. David Ingles ["Which Way Home from Denver?" pages 22-31], senior editor of *CLASSIC TRAINS*, has been on the *TRAINS* staff for 30 years. Dave is a Chicago native whose railroading interests include diesels, passenger trains, and maps. Among his favorite "fallen flag" roads are Wabash, GM&O, Burlington, New York Central, GTW, Soo, and IC. He's been riding trains since age 3, always trying for "new trackage." He's ridden almost every mile Amtrak has ever operated, and has logged over 105,000 unduplicated U.S. and Canadian miles.

Curt Tillotson Jr. ["Queen of the First Ladies," pages 40-43] was born in 1937 in Oxford, N.C., where he still lives. He is retired after a career as a high-school teacher. Curt has written many magazine articles and three books on the Southern Railway. His "I Rode the Crescent—for Free!" was in our Spring 2000 issue. **I**





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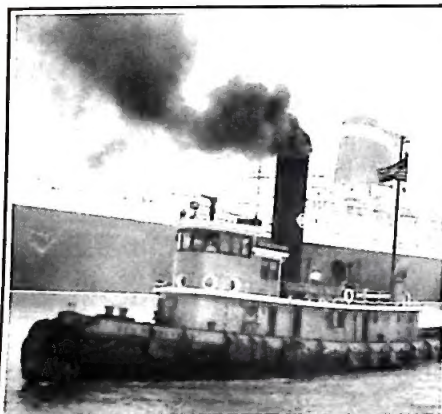
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Link's lasting legacy

My sincere thanks to Messrs. Gruber, Garver, and McGonigal for their fascinating details on the recordings of O. Winston Link ["O. Winston Link's Sounds of Steam," pages 22-31, Summer]. I have all his LP's and still enjoy them. With no wish to diminish the uniqueness of Link's recordings of N&W No. 611, I want to mention that they were in fact not the only ones made of the engine before its first retirement.

In the late 1970's and early '80's the Railroad Record Club of Hawkins, Wis., reissued many of their recordings made in the 1950's on 12-inch LP records. One of the albums, *No. 7: Norfolk & Western/Illinois Central*, features two tracks of the 611. Also, the Semaphore Records album *Modern Steam* closes with a recording of the famous excursion trip of October 1959 during which the 611 ran at over 100 mph.

*John C. Seebeck
Whittier, N.C.*

South Dakota's last varnish, for sure

In Bob Johnston's excellent article on the Dakota mixed trains ["Last of the Prairie Mixeds," pages 38-43, Summer], he mentioned that Milwaukee trains 15-16 were the last passenger service to the state when they ended in 1968. If I recall correctly, the Burlington was still running its Lincoln (Nebr.)-Billings (Mont.) train into 1969. This was the infamous train that when the Burlington got the approval to take it off, they stopped it in the middle of Nebraska and bused the passengers to their destination. This caused a huge uproar, and resulted in

Having just cut across a corner of South Dakota, CB&Q 41 nears Osage, Wyo., on May 28, 1969.



BOB JOHNSTON

an ICC rule requiring all trains to complete their trips, if in progress, after the train-off petition had been approved and received by the carrier.

About 50 miles of this train's route ran through the southwest corner of South Dakota; it changed crews and made a passenger stop at Edgemont.

*Nick Tharalson
Marion, Iowa*

¶ *Bob Johnston can't explain his lapse in this area; see his photo below.—R.S.M.*

North Shore serendipity

How it happened I don't know. But the day before I received my Summer issue [with "Front-Row Seat on the North Shore Line," pages 34-37] I decided to begin repairing and painting four HO Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee coaches that had been languishing in boxes since I built them in the mid-'60's. While engrossed in my undertaking I did a lot of reminiscing about the days before and after World War II when I was a frequent North Shore rider.

While in my last couple of years of high school I used to visit my friend Al Reetz in Waukegan. I would board a North Shore train at the Belmont Ave. station in Chicago on a Friday night or Saturday morning and return home on Sunday evening. This would happen almost every other weekend. On the alternate weekends, Al would come to my house. After coming home from the war we tried to resume these trips, but girls got in the way.

When I saw the front-cover promo for Stephen Lake's great story about his love affair with the North Shore and the vigils he kept at Edison Court station, I went right to that article. More and more

wonderful memories came back to me. Thank you, Stephen Lake, for a job well done.

Walter E. Hilberg
Alborton, Mont.

Admiration for Bob Lewis

The name Robert G. Lewis ["He Saw It All," pages 66-75] is one that has been familiar to me for some 50 years. My brother, Jack Maxson, was working for Curtis Publishing in Philadelphia at that time and commuted from Wyndmoor on the Reading's Chestnut Hill Branch. He met Mr. Lewis on the train one morning and told him of my interest in railroads. Soon, my brother was bringing home copies of *Railway Age* for me to read. I also received the 1951 edition of *Handbook of American Railroads*, which is still in my library today. I have never met Mr. Lewis, but I have great admiration for his work.

Fred Maxson
Glenside, Pa.

I enjoyed the article on Bob Lewis, an old-timer like myself. I guess it takes an old-timer to know that the cars in the Philadelphia Rapid Transit photo on page 70 are not roadsters, but ordinary sedans, apparently 4-door models. (The right-hand one may be a 1937 or '38 Plymouth.) Roadsters are soft-top coupes (sometimes with rumble seats). Today we would call them convertibles.

John C. Illman
Nordland, Wash.

Much ado about the Monon

I am certainly enjoying your efforts to bring back the good old railroading days. I look forward to each issue. In the Summer 2001 issue I note a photo on pages 66-67 of a Monon train on 5th Street in Lafayette, Ind., in October 1943. I had just left the Purdue campus in April 1943 for the army. On pages 50-51, you also show Monon F3's in Chicago. They were active shortly after I returned in 1946. Quite a bit of coverage for a small line like the Monon.

I wonder how many readers are aware that the reason Purdue University sports teams are known as the Boilermakers is due to the Monon. The story goes that many years ago Purdue played Indiana University at Bloomington.

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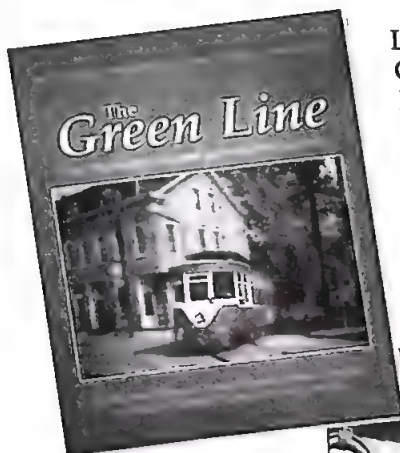
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Northern Pacific

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TROY STRANE

ton in football and won. The next day the Bloomington newspapers reported that the Purdue players were not from the student body but were actually boilermakers from the Monon shops which were located in Lafayette. Purdue liked the name and it became the official team designation.

John Steinebach
Lynn Haven, Florida

Daylight delicacy

A line in James E. Valle's "Sampling California's Streamliners" [pages 60-65, Summer] brought back a memory of something I'd forgotten—the "dried candied peaches and apricots" the news butcher hawked on the *San Joaquin Daylights*. Those were "Aplets and Cotlets," and the only place I ever saw them sold was on the *Daylights*! Tell Valle he didn't miss anything by not buying them.

Bill Deaver
Mojave, Calif.

Let's hear it for the Geeps

I just saw the "Geep Country" photo in your Summer issue [pages 20-21] and had to share this with you. I'm the Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers for the Indiana Northeastern Railroad (IN) based in Hillsdale, Mich.

The Detroit & Toledo Shore Line train pictured was of great interest to me because GP7 47 on the point is still alive and kicking on IN. It runs in regular freight service and has been fairly reliable over the many years we've owned it. Unfortunately, things could soon change as IN may be trading it in. Business is growing and it's simply time for newer power. The 47 will probably be used in the purchase of a couple of ex-Conrail GP30's. We have other Geeps,

lettered for the Pigeon River Railroad, an Indiana Northeastern predecessor, 47-year-old former D&TSL GP7 47 works an IN train at Ashley, Ind., in 1999.

but the 47 has the old "B" block and is a terrible water leaker when it's cold. The 47 is still in a latter-day Shore Line black-and-yellow paint scheme, minus the logos. In fact, we used that livery as a model when we came up with the "official" IN paint scheme.

I hate the thought of losing the 47, especially when you see photos like that one. It's also hard to let it go because it was the first locomotive we owned around here. There are a lot of memories—I even hit a truck with it once! Gaining a couple GP30's will certainly help fill the void, but the loss will still be hard to swallow.

Troy Strane
Quincy, Mich.

Just thought I'd let you know I enjoyed Greg McDonnell's article on Geeps in Canada ["London's Pride and Joy," pages 78-85]. I guess I'm just a sucker for first-generation diesel articles, especially about Midwest locations. Also, the page 20 photo of the D&TSL brought back memories, as I grew up in Toledo, and I have probably passed the Lang yard by car 100 times. I regret I did not keep my photos that I took in the 1960's. I'm glad to see some people did.

Chris Macey
Venetia, Pa. ■

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Fallen Flags Remembered

A bit of flair in the coalfields

AS A KID growing up in Virginia's Tidewater area, I would go to sleep each night listening to the sounds of a Virginian Railway 2-8-2 switching the nearby yards. The gentle sounds and pungent aroma of smoke would drift through the night air and into my bedroom window like a soothing gauze, especially in the warmer months (this was before air-conditioning).

The Virginian (VGN) had been built in the early 1900's for one purpose—to take bituminous coal from the West Virginia coalfields to the piers at Sewell's Point on Chesapeake Bay, near Norfolk. The 600-mile carrier did its job with efficiency, speed, and a flair unique among the generally drab coal carriers of the time.

The railway traced its ancestry to 1902, when Standard Oil vice president Henry Huttleston Rogers acquired the 4-mile Deepwater Railway. Two years later he had extended it to the Virginia state line and incorporated the Tidewater Railway to build eastward to the Norfolk seaport.

Tidewater was renamed Virginian in April 1907, and a month later it acquired the Deepwater. Track was completed to Sewell's Point in early 1909. For the 436 miles from Deepwater, W.Va., to Norfolk, the line was constructed on a direct path with a grade

favorable to loaded coal trains and avoiding most major towns. The steepest mainline grade for loads was 14 miles of 2 percent between Elmore and the summit of Clark's Gap Mountain in West Virginia. VGN's coal-mine branches were another matter, however.

Some of these steep spurs, like the Beards Fork Branch, reached 3.48 percent, and some spurs, though short, required Mallets.

Rogers made only one trip over his new railroad. Shortly before the opening in 1909, he took his friend, writer Mark Twain, aboard his private car *Dixie*, one of the last wooden business cars Pullman outshopped, over the entire line. Rogers died a month later. Today *Dixie*, built in 1906 for the Tidewater, is in the Kentucky Railway Museum collection.

Virginian's steam locomotives ranged from high-stepping 4-4-0 Americans to a huge 1917 Baldwin 2-8-8-4 Triplex, No. 700. This "Big Mama" was designed to pull trains up the Clark's Gap grade but proved unsuited to the task—the boiler was unable to supply enough steam to power the three sets of cylinders. Virginian's typically inventive solu-

Virginian 2-8-2 436, one of 42 in the noted MB class, switches in Norfolk on December 19, 1954.



H. REID PHOTO; MALLORY HOPE FERRELL COLLECTION

By Mallory Hope Ferrell



MALLORY HOPE FERRELL

Pacific 213 smokes out of Suffolk, Va., during the final week of VGN's modest varnish operations.

tion was to rebuild it into two locomotives. In 1920 the engine unit became 610, a one-of-a-kind 2-8-8-0; it later had a trailing truck added. The tender engine was rebuilt as 2-8-2 410, sole member of the MD class. Another one-of-a-kind was 2-8-6-2 600, built by Baldwin in 1910 and rebuilt in '22 as a 2-8-8-2.

Also noteworthy was VGN's fleet of 12-wheel gondola cars, 50 feet long on the inside, which could carry up to 120 tons of coal. First acquired in 1916, these mammoth flat-bottom "Battleship Gons" were so impressive that neighbors Norfolk & Western and Chesapeake & Ohio soon acquired similar cars. From 1920 to 1924, VGN had 2024 of them built. They were not so popular with some customers, though. Lacking hopper doors, they required mechanical or rotary dumpers, and were soon relegated to mine-to-pier service. They seldom ventured off home rails, but the last ones weren't cut up until after the 1959 merger of VGN into N&W.

In 1926, Virginian completed electrification of 132 miles of main line between Roanoke and Mullens, W.Va. The motive power, pairs of Alco-Westinghouse box-cab, side-rod/jackshaft units, became known as "squareheads." Four modern, streamlined, two-unit GE cab sets, 125-128, arrived in 1948, followed by a dozen boxy C-C electrics, 130-141,

in 1956-57. (The latter went to the New Haven after VGN wires came down.)

Virginian had one major shop, just west of the Virginia border in Princeton, W.Va. Here VGN built much of its own rolling stock, rebuilt and repaired almost everything it owned, and employed just about everyone in town. The electrics were maintained at the Mullens (W.Va.) Motor Barn; roundhouses for steam running repairs and servicing were at Sewell's Point, Victoria, Roanoke, Princeton, Elmore, and Page.

Virginian was never much of a passenger road, and its trains carried few people because the route avoided most big towns. VGN owned only 10 steel coaches, painted Pullman green, none with air-conditioning. Before the mid-'30's, mixed trains ran on several branches. After VGN bridged the Kanawha River at Deepwater in 1931, passenger trains operated west to Charleston on New York Central trackage rights. Regular passenger power was six PA class Pacifics built by Alco's Richmond works in 1920, which relegated 4-4-0's and 4-6-0's to miners' mixed trains. The last of the 4-4-0's, 101, lasted until 1953.

The mainline passenger runs were daytime trains 3 and 4 between Norfolk, Roanoke, and (until 1954) Page (near Deepwater). Train 3 left Norfolk Union Station, home to VGN headquarters, each morning at 8 and was carded into Roanoke at 4. Eastbound No. 4 departed Roanoke at 7:30 and was scheduled

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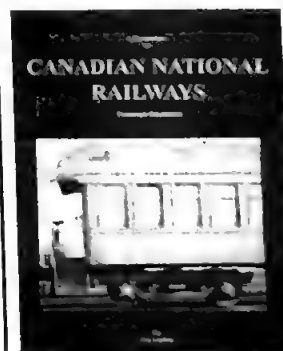
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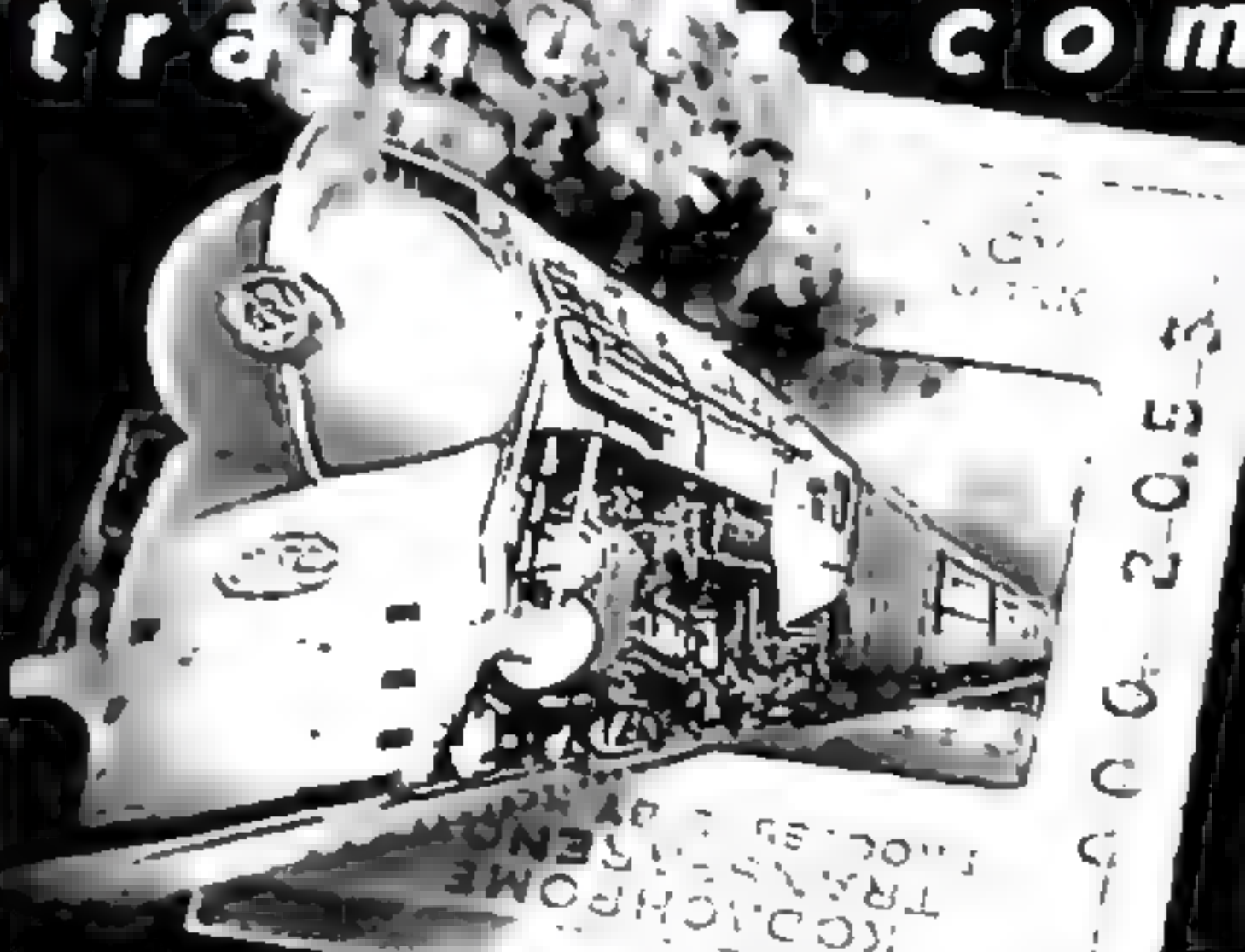
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into Norfolk at 2:46. Their normal meeting point was Nutbush, Milepost 125.2, 6 miles east of the division point of Victoria. The schedule was somewhat leisurely, yet arrival at each end was often late, for the dispatcher frequently would put the consists "in the hole" to meet a coal train. There was no doubt where Virginian's priorities lay!

The passenger trains had steam power until the end, on January 29, 1956. Home from college for a few days, I was at trackside in Suffolk with my Rollei camera as the last varnish departed behind Pacific 212. Fittingly, the day was overcast and gray as the station agent gave a final wave to engineer W. H. Palmer, fireman G. E. Corning, and conductor J. C. Meadow on the westbound.

While most major roads had committed to diesels, Virginian took pride

VGN's famous "bathtub gons" and other coal cars are pushed by one of the road's 10 long-lived 2-10-10-2 Mallets under catenary near Monte Carlo and trail FM Train Masters at Portsmouth.

in burning what it hauled (the overhead wires were powered by a coal-burning generation plant at Narrows, Va.). So in 1950, VGN bought 15 relatively new 0-8-0 Lima switchers from C&O and designated them class SB. Built in 1942-43, they took over much of VGN's yard work, though two small, elderly 0-8-0's, Nos. 2 and 4, alternated switching at Suffolk, Va.

I'd like to claim the Virginian Railway as "my own," but that claim belongs to my late friend H. Reid. "Aitch" not only documented the comings and goings of his railway, he wrote its definitive history (*The Virginian Railway*,

Kalmbach, 1961; reprinted in 1970). After H. died, the mantle of Virginian "chief historian" went to Lloyd D. Lewis, like Reid a newspaperman, who has also written volumes on the road. Reid's favorite engines were, without a doubt, the five classes of 2-8-2's, though he was partial to the MB class, 420-461.

During my college days at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI, now "Virginia Tech"), I would hike several miles to Merrimac, where N&W's Blacksburg Branch crossed over VGN's electrified main. I only regret I didn't photograph more of the electrics, but I depleted my film allotment on the remaining steam, which was in its final glory.

Following World War II, Virginian operations settled into a pattern that lasted for a decade. Mountain mainline and mine runs were held down by 50 aging 2-8-8-2's, smoking up the valleys and hollows to mining towns like Willabet, Slab Fork, Maben, and Coal Mountain. These were augmented by 7 used Santa Fe 2-8-8-2's, bought in 1947. Alco-Schenectady had built them for N&W in 1919, but they'd gone west during the war.

Shorter runs and locals were handled by 67 trusty 2-8-2's built by Baldwin 1905-12. The electrics ruled between Mullens and Roanoke, where 8 brand-new Lima 2-6-6-6's and 5 2-8-4's took over for the 243-mile flatland run to Norfolk. Based on C&O designs, these "Super Power" locomotives were Virginian's last new steam engines.

Virginian management finally decided to dieselize in the mid-1950's, ordering from Fairbanks-Morse 40 1600 h.p. B-B H16-44's and 25 Train Masters, FM's behemoth 2400 h.p. C-C model made famous in VGN black and yellow by Lionel's O-gauge model. (Initially, VGN's diesels carried no number on their flanks, later made a federal requirement.) Even old No. 4, "Bee" Moore's trusty Suffolk switcher, was replaced by a secondhand GE 44-tonner, numbered 6. The end of steam came rapidly as the FM's arrived from June 1954 to June '57 (two H16's, 48-49, were delivered in October '57 to replace wrecked 23 and 28).

By acquiring VGN on the first day of December 1959, N&W was able to convert to a more efficient "directional operation" utilizing the parallel mains.

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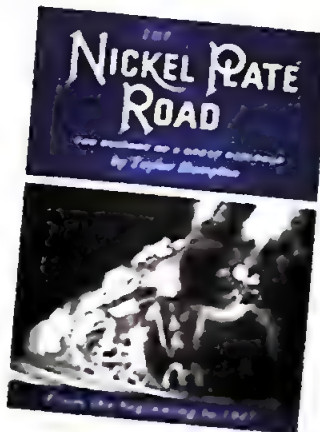
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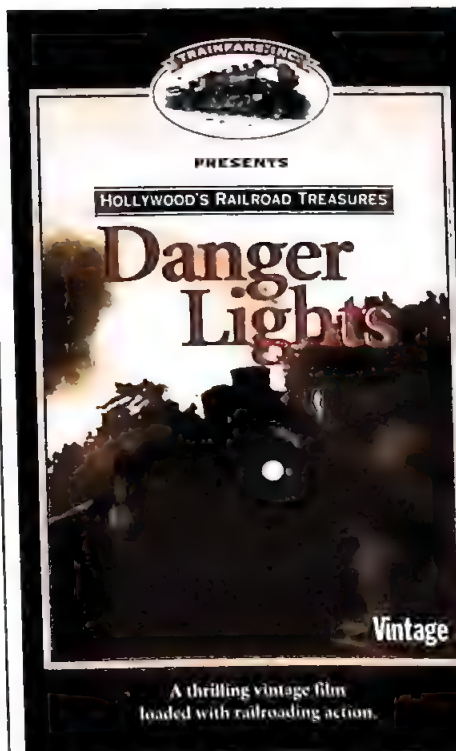
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Fallen Flags Remembered

Virginian's electric operation was kept until June 1962 before being decommissioned, but the Sewell's Point coal piers were immediately shut down in favor of N&W's at nearby Lambert's Point. All remaining Virginian steam locomotives were sold for scrap within two months after the merger. N&W had all EMD or Alco diesels, but after the big '64 merger, VGN's FM's had company on the N&W with units from Nickel Plate, Wabash, Pittsburgh & West Virginia, and Akron, Canton & Youngstown. An ex-VGN Train Master was the last one to operate in the U.S., in 1976.

Only one Virginian steamer survives: Moore's little SA 1910 Baldwin 0-8-0 Suffolk switcher 4, one of the first five engines ordered by newly formed VGN. Today the "Four Spot" is in Roanoke's Virginia Museum of Transportation.

Virginian's great coal piers have been scrapped, and the east end of the old Norfolk Division, between Chesapeake Bay and Abilene (MP 143.4), torn up. The division point of Victoria is trackless and almost a ghost town. In West Virginia, portions of the old main, plus many coal branches, are gone. Even the spectacular New River and East River bridges have been dismantled. Of the 50-plus active coal mines on VGN at the 1959 merger, fewer than 10 remain in production. For me, the Virginian remains as a vivid memory of the sounds of an MB 2-8-2 drifting through my bedroom window on a warm summer night. ■

Virginian fact file

(comparative figures are for 1929 and 1958)

Route-miles: 545; 596

Locomotives: 175; 120

Passenger cars: 62; 14

Freight cars: 10,273; 17,143

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Shop location: Princeton, W.Va.

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Sources: *The Virginian Railway*, H. Reid (Kalmbach, 1961); *Historical Guide to North American Railroads*, George H. Drury (Kalmbach, 1999); *The Virginian Era*, Lloyd D. Lewis (TLC Publishing, 1992); *Virginian Railway Locomotives*, Lewis (TLC, 1993).

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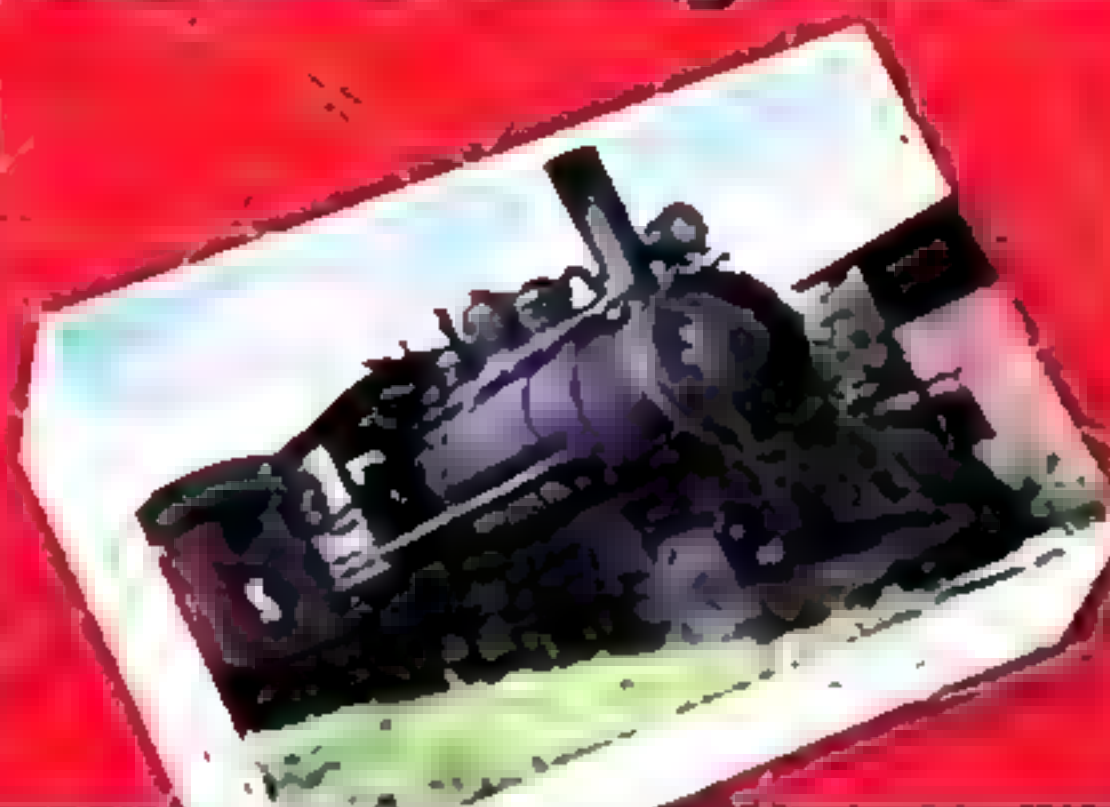


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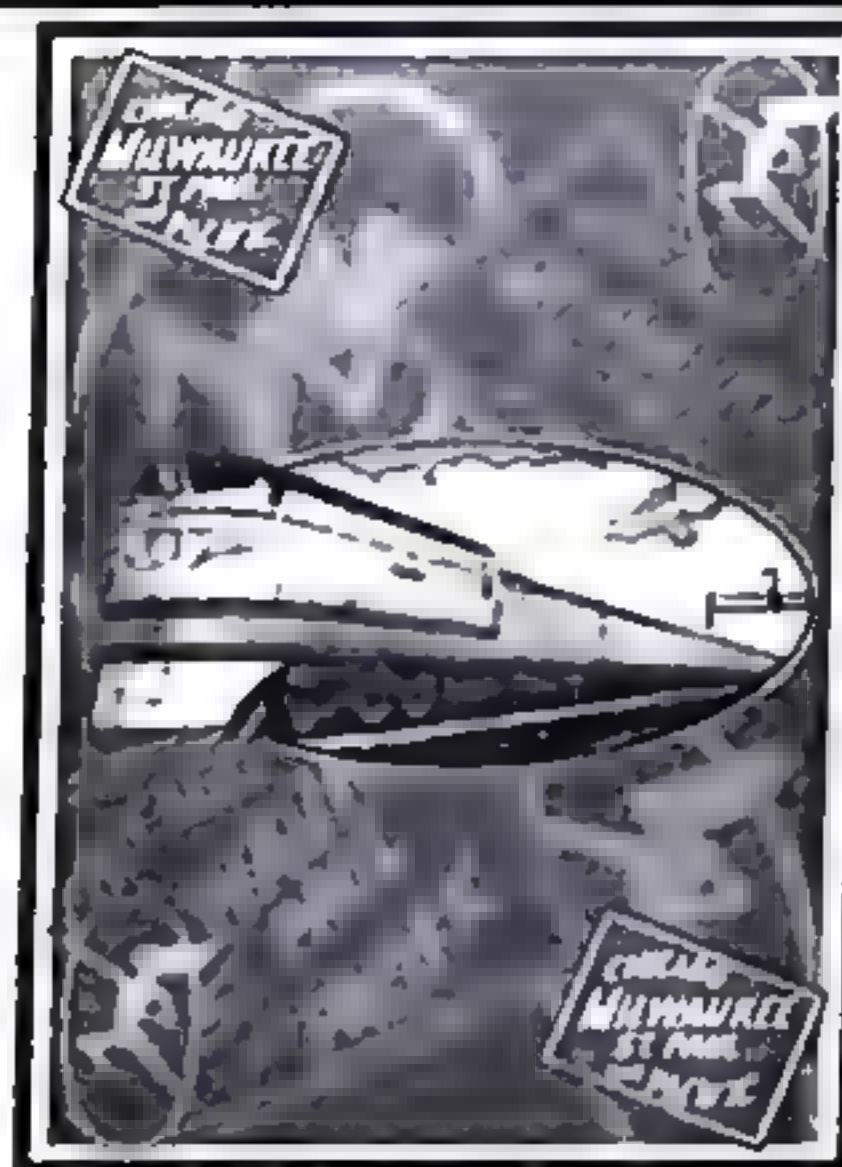
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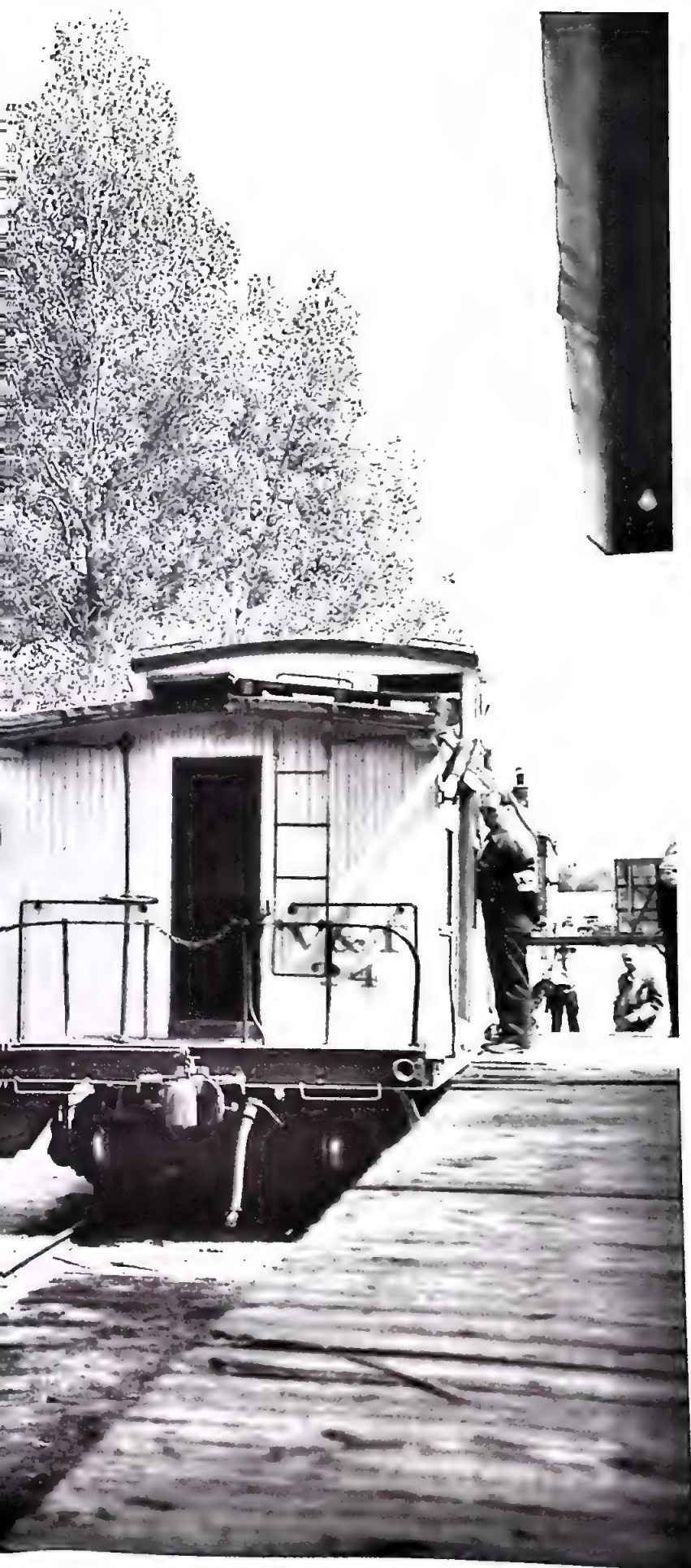
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Last hours of a legend

THE VIRGINIA & TRUCKEE was bigger than life. The men whose names adorned the Nevada short line's history—Darius Ogden Mills, William Sharon, even Cecil B. DeMille—are part of the lexicon of the West. The railroad's association with fabulous mineral wealth—the “Big Bonanza” of 1873, in particular—gave it a panache few mining roads could claim. And when, in later years, Lucius Beebe celebrated it as “the Yankee Princess of American railroads,” its fate as an icon was sealed.

In truth, most of V&T's history was prosaic. As the mines declined in the early 20th century, the railroad fell back on the bread and butter of a typical short line: a precarious market of agricultural and passenger traffic. And by 1950, the V&T story was about finished. Here, at Minden, Nev., the calm of a hot, unhurried May afternoon is interrupted when the 4-6-0 on the daily mixed train waits to be turned for the journey back to Carson City and Reno. Ahead three weeks looms abandonment.—Kevin P. Keefe



JIM MORLEY

Which way home

It was a delightful dilemma for an Illinois fan heading east in 1967

By J. David Ingles • Photos by the author

W

HICH WAY TO GO HOME? The dilemma was not a serious one, but it was perplexing. I was in Denver, on vacation, between newspaper jobs. The time: May 1967. I'd come from Illinois, by train, to

visit my sister, Janis, in her last weeks as a senior at the University of Colorado in Boulder, as well as some railfan friends in the Mile High City.

My route west from my new home in Springfield, Ill., had been direct: Illinois Central's *Green Diamond* to St. Louis, and the Norfolk & Western-Union Pacif-

ic *City of St. Louis*—still a through train via Kansas City—to Denver. I'd mapped out via the *Official Guide* two itineraries for the return, hence the heavy pondering. I wound up beginning my homeward trek on the train you see pictured (the evening before I rode) below and on the cover, and here's why.



from Denver?

Each alternative had its attractions in the way of unusual diesel locomotives (my top interest) or passenger equipment. This was way before the term "rare mileage" had any meaning to me, or was even widely known. I was interested in riding trains and routes that were new to me, just for variety's sake, but I considered it "new trackage" and rarely bothered tallying miles traveled.

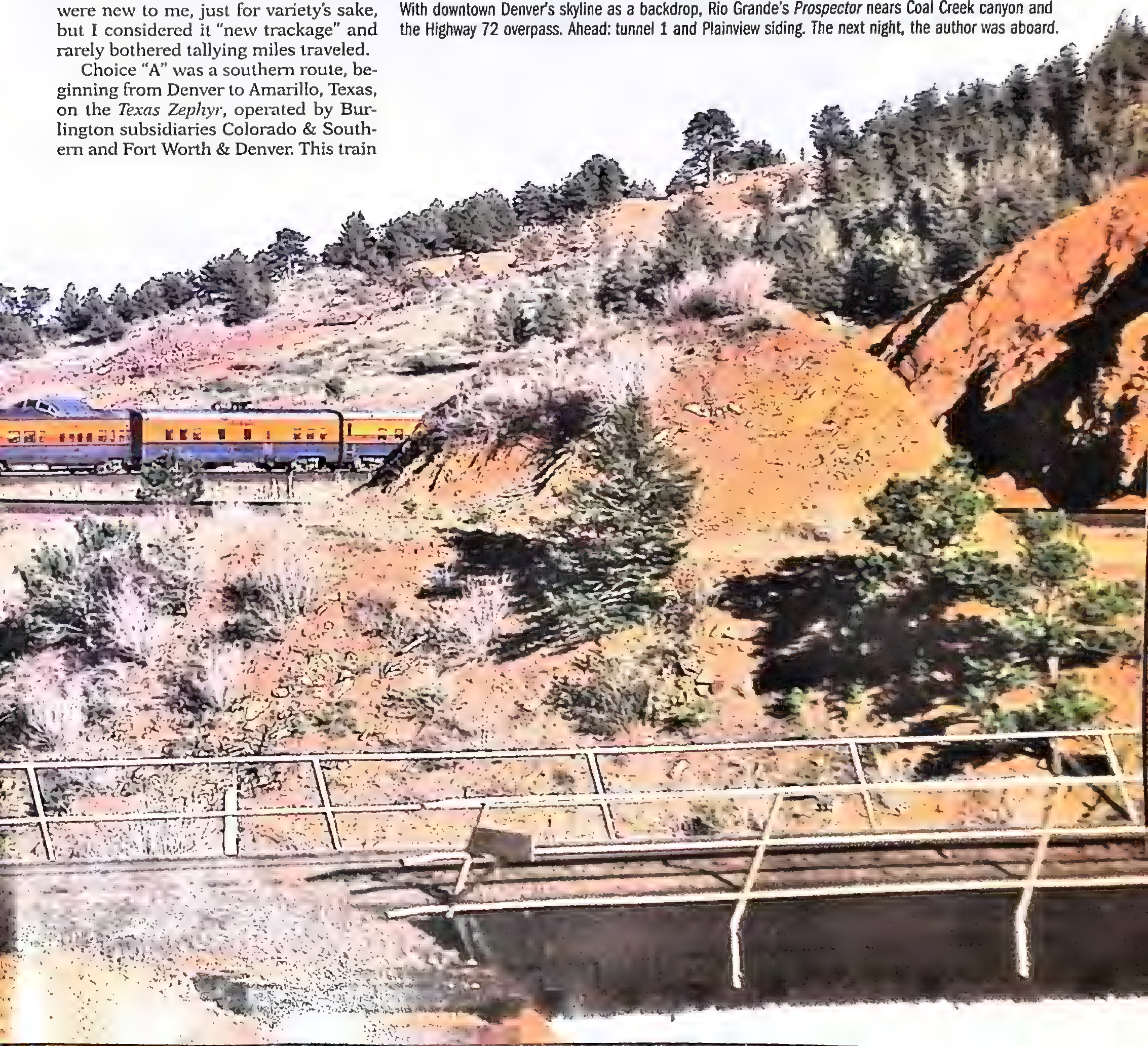
Choice "A" was a southern route, beginning from Denver to Amarillo, Texas, on the *Texas Zephyr*, operated by Burlington subsidiaries Colorado & Southern and Fort Worth & Denver. This train

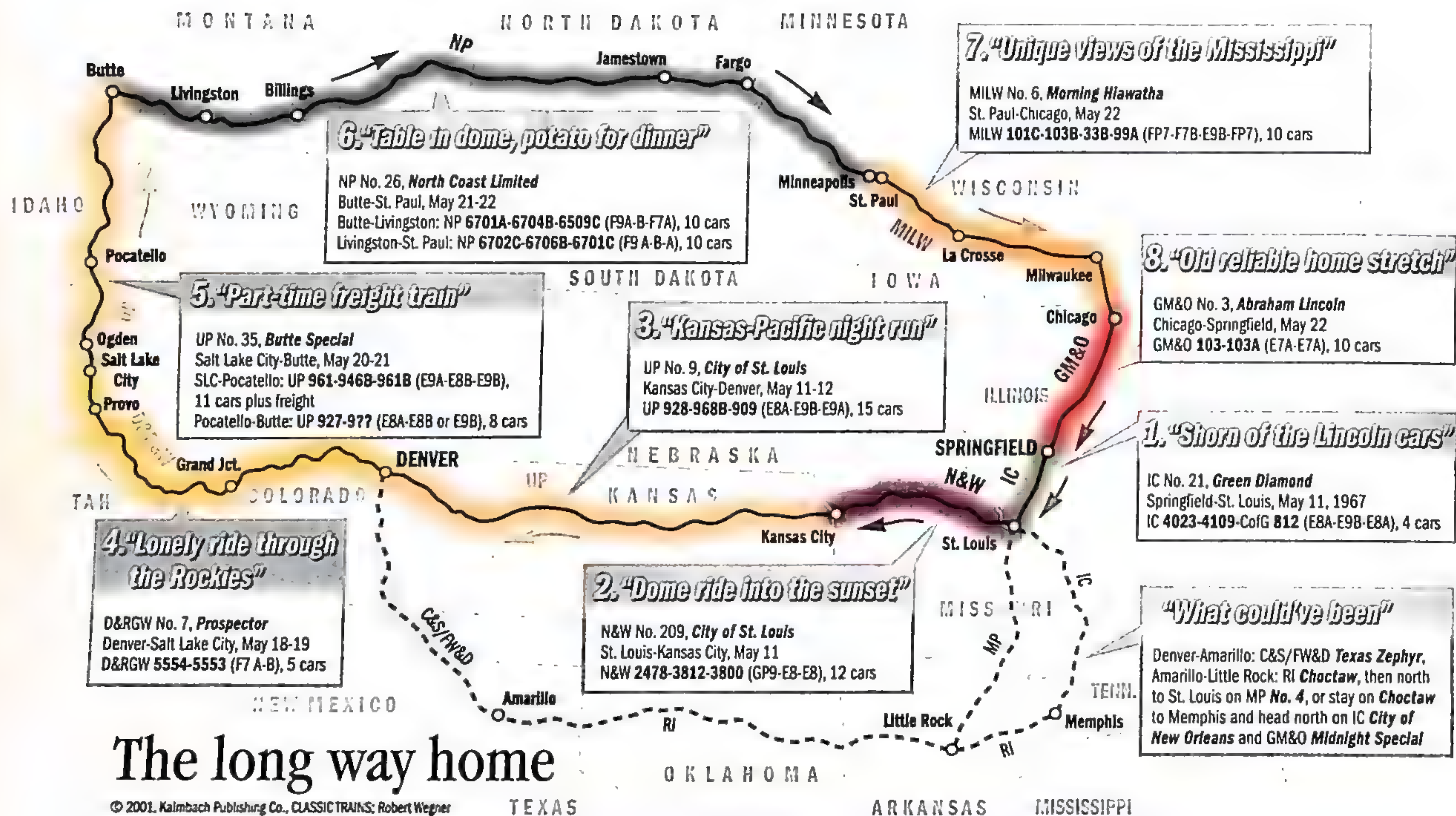
still had sleeping-car service on its overnight run out of the Mile High City, and was usually powered by the Q's unique slant-nosed, stainless-steel EMD E5 units. From Amarillo east my journey would be a test of stamina, on the

sole train traversing Rock Island's Choctaw Route between Tucumcari, N.Mex., and Memphis, coach-only No. 22.

This route, which until recently had also been home to the longest RDC run in the country at 875 miles, now had

With downtown Denver's skyline as a backdrop, Rio Grande's *Prospector* nears Coal Creek canyon and the Highway 72 overpass. Ahead: tunnel 1 and Plainview siding. The next night, the author was aboard.





only one train, a mail-and-express local that, eastward, connected from a similar Southern Pacific train, No. 40, at Tucumcari. Rumor had it that the regular power on this RI Memphis train was SP GP9's instead of the customary RI FP7.

I'd photographed these nameless "Choctaw" trains, including the RDC's, at Oklahoma City and Howe, Okla., and Little Rock, Ark., but I'd ridden not a mile of the route. I figured I could go home from the Rock Island train by one of two routes, but neither was attractive. I could get off at Little Rock at 2:10 a.m. and wait for Missouri Pacific's nameless, coach-only No. 4 at 8:25, or go on to Memphis, where I'd have to wait from 6 a.m. until the first northbound IC train, the *City of New Orleans*, at 2:10 p.m. Either way, I would miss GM&O's afternoon *Limited* out of St. Louis and have to wait for the 11:30 p.m. *Midnight Special* back to Springfield.

Choice "B" was over 1000 miles longer: the Rio Grande to Salt Lake City, UP's *Butte Special* to its namesake terminus in Montana, and Northern Pacific's *North Coast Limited* eastward. When I got to thinking about SP's Alco PA diesels, though, this choice was the easy winner. My "Salute to a Different Diesel" feature on PAs in November 1966 TRAINS



was still fresh reading, and I felt compelled to add SP to my PA "logbook." I'd seen or photographed live PAs, or ridden behind them, on 7 of the 17 railroads that owned 'em (and seen 4 others' in scrap lines), but I'd never seen one of SP's, one of the last four roads to operate them (prior to the secondhanders on Delaware & Hudson). The last survivors of SP's great fleet held down three of the four trainsets on the tri-weekly *City of San Francisco* between Oakland and Salt Lake City, so by going west from Denver and taking a day or two in Utah, I could at least see some.

THE TRIP OUT TO DENVER seemed routine at the time, but, like most experiences of three decades past, becomes more precious in memory with the passage of time. My IC *Green Diamond* of May 11 left Springfield 43 minutes late at 5 minutes past noon, and backed into St. Louis Union Station at 2:15, having shaved 8 minutes off the delay. Our little four-car consist of an express boxcar, an RPO, an ex-C&EI diner-lounge, and a single coach seemed paltry for our A-B-A trio of E's (the trailing unit one of two painted in IC colors but lettered Central of Geor-



Similar looks: IC's *Green Diamond* leaves Springfield behind an A-B-A trio of E's five years before the author's ride, and N&W's *City of St. Louis* heads east from Moberly, Mo., a month before, with one E8 and two Geeps vs. the two E's and lone Geep of May 11, 1967. During his Denver visit with friends, the author photographed Rio Grande trains at Plainview, including this eastbound freight (top) on May 14.

gia for the *City of Miami* pool), but there was a reason. In Springfield, the train had dropped its weekday Chicago-Springfield parlor car, plus eight coaches that had been occupied by school kids. On most May weekdays in that era, both IC and GM&O handled a lot of groups from the Chicago area to Springfield to tour the state capitol and the Lincoln shrines. This was one reason

that in July 1968 IC's train would not come off, but instead would be truncated to a Chicago-Springfield turn renamed the *Governor's Special*, which ran until Amtrak's inception.

In St. Louis, I had an hour and 25 minutes to connect to the *City of St. Louis*. Still a healthy train with a dozen cars out of Union Station, the service was on short time as a through opera-

tion, though. In March '68 N&W would end the through cars, and UP would rename its train *City of Kansas City*, connecting to an N&W coach-and-café *City of St. Louis*. My N&W train 209 left with an ex-Nickel Plate passenger GP9 leading two of the five ex-Wabash E8As that N&W had repainted after the big 1964 merger. In their charge were a MoPac express boxcar, four N&W storage mail cars and an RPO, and six UP cars: two coaches, a dome coach, a lounge, a diner, and sleeper *National Scene*.

I mostly rode the dome through the rolling country of central Missouri as twilight approached, but I did interrupt my dome-riding for dinner in the diner. To keep the train pointed properly west in K.C., N&W (as had Wabash) routed the *City of St. Louis* off the main line at Birmingham, Mo., across RI's Truman Bridge, and onto Kansas City Terminal at Sheffield Junction to go downtown. (N&W's passenger trains from St. Louis generally went via the "Hannibal" [CB&Q] bridge and "the bottoms" to enter Union Station from the west.)

We pulled into K.C. Union Station just short of 9 p.m., 10 minutes late. This was at least my 10th visit by train to this magnificent train-watching venue, on seven roads, but this stay would



be short. During what turned out to be a 45-minute layover, we exchanged the N&W diesels and all but one of the head-end cars for an A-B-A set of UP E units, three head-end cars including an SP storage mail boxcar and a UP RPO, and three more passenger cars: a coach plus sleepers *Pacific Home* and *National Frontier*. My sleeper and one put on at K.C. went through to Los Angeles; the third terminated in Denver. We left K.C. as a 15-car UP train No. 9 and were 20 minutes off schedule, but try to see that level of efficiency in today's U.S. passenger switching operations! I lowered my roomette bed after Topeka, and awoke as we neared Denver. We pulled into Union Station 5 minutes early.

THIS TRIP ENABLED ME to make a reacquaintance with the Denver area's railroad scene. Our family had vacationed regularly in Colorado during my teen years in the '50's, and I'd spent a year of college at Boulder, but had seldom been back since. Two days after arriving, I was able to spend a day out photographing action with friends, mainly Hol Wagner (later a publisher of Burlington Northern books) and the late Ken Crist. We went up to Plainview on Rio Grande's Moffat Tunnel line, and



Against a mountain backdrop on May 18, a Rock Island freight heads from Denver's North Yard to Sandown, Colo., and trackage rights on UP to Limon. Two GWR SW1's mosey toward Loveland on May 16.

down to Castle Rock on the Joint Line, shared by owners Rio Grande and Santa Fe and tenant C&S. The next day we hung out closer to the city, photographing the Grande's overnight *Prospector* coming in from Salt Lake City and the outbound *Yampa Valley Mail* for Craig, Colo., with its usual PA, and the *California Zephyr*. We also nabbed a Rock Island freight leaving the city, one of the few places you could put a mountain backdrop in an RI photo. A few days

later, we made a quick trip up to Loveland and the Great Western Railway.

On May 18, my itinerary decision having been made and the tickets purchased, I boarded the *Prospector* for its 5:30 p.m. Denver departure. The evening before, Ken and I had photographed this vest-pocket streamliner at Coal Creek canyon [cover and page 22]. Wearing matching Grande Gold and silver with black striping from the front of its lead F-unit nose to the rear vestibule, it was a



On the afternoon of May 18, PA 6013 revs up out of Littleton with the Denver-bound *Royal Gorge*. That same evening, the author was heading west as the *Prospector* met a D&RGW freight at Clay siding.

handsome little train. But few people rode it, and, unbeknownst to me at the time, it would expire at the end of that very month. Just as on Burlington's overnight Kansas City-Chicago *American Royal Zephyr* the New Year's weekend before, I was able to purchase a roomette on the *Prospector* for a nominal charge on top of the one-way coach fare.

Off we went, on time, out of Union Station to attack the Front Range. This was not much of a problem for our two

F7's, 5554-5553 in A-B formation, for we had only five cars: baggage-mail 1211, combine 1230, coach 1242, diner 805 *Castle Peak*, and sleeper 1273. I'd already had a nice dinner in the diner, alone, in the shadows of a mountain sunset, as we plunged into Moffat Tunnel at 7:31 for a 10-minute, 45-second passage. I woke up to note our Grand Junction departure at 1:30 a.m., 35 minutes late. The next stop I was aware of was at Provo, Utah, at 7:15, only 10 minutes down.

We pulled into the Rio Grande station, shared with WP, in Salt Lake on time at 8 a.m. sharp on another sunny day.

Western Pacific was a railroad I hadn't seen, so during my day in Salt Lake I concentrated on photographing its locomotives at Roper Yard, and its freights arriving from and leaving for the west. Then I drove my rental car up north to Ogden, conserving mileage in those cash-poor times when the rental firms wanted so-many cents per mile, so I could see the SP PA's the next morning.

I almost missed 'em. Oh, I drove out west from the Ogden yard on some back roads in plenty of time to park and even see a couple of freights go by before a late (as usual) train 102 bumbled around the bend off the Great Salt Lake behind units 6045, 6043, 6041, and 6042. But in Denver, I'd originally planned to leave a day or two earlier, anticipating encountering the previous "City" to the one I photographed on May 20. Luckily I changed my mind, although the reason I did so is lost to history. For, while inquiring in the yard at Ogden, I learned that the previous 102-101 turn (it was a tri-weekly train, remember) had been in the charge of a quartet of FP7's, the one blemish in this last stand of SP's big Alcos. I even beat the *City* back into



town for a second action shot passing the yard office [March 1998 *TRAINS*]. I didn't ignore the ranks of clean SP SD45's, SD40's, and Century 628's at the yard, either. Mission accomplished, I drove back to Salt Lake to board that evening's *Butte Special*, first checking at Roper to shoot more WP GP20's and 35's, and Rio Grande GP30's and SD9's.

THE *BUTTE SPECIAL* WAS a perhaps unique animal on "Uncle Pete." Unknown to me, or I'd have made sure to photograph its southbound arrival in Ogden that morning, it served to haul freight, too. I discovered this in the northern extremes of Salt Lake City shortly after an unexplained 40-minute stop. We'd left UP's Salt Lake depot on time at 7:30 p.m., then halted 10 minutes later, not to resume movement until 8:20. When I looked back from the open Dutch door of sleeper *American View* as we headed north again in the day's last light, I saw on a curve that we had on the rear a string of loaded piggyback flats and a caboose! According to a trainman, UP had an agreement with its unions that this train could haul up to 30 cars, I think he said, of TOFC flats between Salt Lake and Pocatello. Before adding the TOFC, our consist was an A-B-B trio

"My first WP action shot," says the author of 3515 West leaving Salt Lake City on May 19. Payoff for the Utah visit was SP 102 burbling around a curve just east of Great Salt Lake behind four PA's the next morning. A westbound freight was ready to leave Ogden Yard with three F's and an ex-demonstrator Alco C628. In Butte, Mont., on May 21, NP's *North Coast* sneaks into town on the tail of UP's *Butte Special*.

of E's and 11 cars: one each CB&Q, UP, and SP mail, three UP express baggage, an RPO, the sleeper, and three coaches.

The *American View* also helped make trains 35 and 36 unique, for it was one of two sleepers in which UP had removed one open section to create space for a tiny galley, with the section across the aisle kept as a booth with a table. *Voilà*—a sleeper-dinette, or to quote the *Official Guide*, "meal and beverage service now available." Cozy meals, these.

We were out of Ogden at 9:15 p.m., 20 minutes tardy, and Cache Junction was the last stop I was awake for, at 10:25. I slept through the apparent shuffling in the wee hours at Pocatello that resulted in our consist the next morning having been shaved to a new lead unit, E8A 927, a single B, and eight cars: an Erie express box, one each SP and UP storage mail (different from the ones out of Salt Lake), one of the UP baggage cars we'd brought along, plus the same RPO and sleeper, and the first two coaches.

I awoke to another sunny morning, though a bit crisp, in southern Montana.

I had no idea if we were on time. Timing was critical, for I had a short connection in Butte to the *North Coast Limited*. We stopped at Silver Bow at 7:15 a.m., on time, for 5 minutes before being allowed onto NP trackage rights for the last 7 miles into Butte. I was getting nervous until we resumed moving. On we rambled into Butte, and the train pulled into its special "reserved" stub track (complete with sign) at the NP depot. I detrained and walked forward amidst the other passengers, stopping ahead of the E unit to get a photo. I intended to wait until the people cleared.

Imagine my surprise when I heard a horn, and here came the *North Coast* pulling in alongside on the main, having been running right behind us! I hurriedly snapped a slide [top right], high-tailed it on forward, and boarded the sleek, two-tone-green streamliner that would take me back to the Midwest. We were moving, on-time, at 7:45, exactly 15 minutes after the *Butte Special* halted at the bumping post. I never even saw the inside of the Butte depot.



FOR NO CONCRETE REASON, I was always partial to the *North Coast* over its rival, Great Northern's *Empire Builder*, which I didn't ride west of Fargo, N.Dak., until after Amtrak began. I suppose it was because my visits in Montana were to photograph Milwaukee Road electrics, and Milwaukee paralleled the NP, so that's the line I rode. I certainly can't quibble with the *Builder's* colors, at least the green and orange that preceded Big Sky Blue and gray, but Raymond Loewy's NP green scheme rated a bit higher in my book. Milwaukee Road wasn't in this picture—the *Olympian Hiawatha* was gone before I could have ridden even its remnant west of Aberdeen, S.Dak.

I had two objectives on the *North Coast Limited*: Ride a dome as much as possible (my love of domes came from all those Chicago-Denver family vacation trips on the Q), and eat an NP Great Big Baked Potato. I accomplished both. In fact, I had a roomette in the dome sleeper, whose dome had been recently rebuilt by Pullman to serve as the first-class lounge (called "Cocktails in the Sky") to replace the *North Coast's* round-end observation car. I marveled at the tables in the dome, on which, since the train wasn't crowded, I could spread out

my maps. I much prefer Budd "short" domes to ACF's version (as on UP, for example) because you sit higher in the seats and can see more, but the only short domes I'd ridden before were equipped with just seats, no tables.

I counted my cash carefully in order to have a full dinner out in eastern Montana. Credit cards, except for gasoline company ones, weren't yet in my picture, and while my cardboard Rail Travel Card (remember them?) bought my tickets, allowing me to ride now and pay later, either the RTC wasn't accepted in the dining car, or I was too naive to ask.

Our *North Coast* was a classic of its time, with 10 cars behind a trio of F units. Having not had time to do so at Butte, I did take advantage of the lay-over at Livingston to savor the train from trackside. Following the scenic crawl through Homestake Pass, stops at Logan and Bozeman, and passage over Bozeman Pass, we pulled into Livingston at 11:15 for a 15-minute power-swap drill and train servicing. A mixed trio of F9A and B and trailing F7A was taken off in favor of an A-B-A F9 set. Our train was a baggage car, RPO, dome coach, flat-top coach, dome coach, Slumbercoach *Loch Ness*, a lounge, diner, my dome sleeper, and a flat-top sleeper. All

but the Slumbercoach carried three-digit numbers but were nameless.

On east we went, gradually making up for our worst timekeeping, 37 minutes late out of Billings. We stopped at eight stations—none for more than 4 minutes except for Billings and Mandan, which involved crew changes—before I called it a night following our on-time midnight departure from Jamestown, N.Dak. Next morning, we were out of Minneapolis' Great Northern depot, still on time, at 6:15 after a 10-minute stop, and at 6:40 pulled into St. Paul Union Depot, where I detrained.

Why bail out on this fine limited? I had a date with another unique conveyance. I'd patronized the Burlington between St. Paul and Chicago, NP's connecting route, several times, but I'd had only one brief visit (on a Milwaukee-Chicago trip) inside a Skytop Lounge, Milwaukee's unique home-built observation cars, so I'd reserved a parlor seat on the *Morning Hiawatha* to Chicago. An A-B-B-A set of three F's and one E9B pulled in from Minneapolis with 10 cars: an RPO, baggage mail, four coaches, "Super Dome" lounge 59, "Buffeteria" diner lounge 125, full parlor car 180 *Forest Grove*, and Skytop parlor 188 *Dell Rapids*.



We left "SPUD" on time at 8:05 a.m., and I skipped a dining-car breakfast to savor the Mississippi River through those unusual rear Skytop windows. As we raced along the river and across Wisconsin on that pretty May 22 morning, we made much the same stops that Amtrak's *Empire Builder* does today, skipping Wisconsin Dells but making Watertown and Oconomowoc, which Amtrak ignores. After on-time running into Milwaukee, we fell down a few minutes and pulled into Chicago Union Station 10 late, at 2:55.

Thanks to Milwaukee Road's good

Northern Pacific Montana scenes: Geeps push a westbound freight up Bozeman Pass as seen from the *North Coast*; F's swap out at Livingston; NP 2524 West passes the *NCL* in the siding at Big Timber.

operation, I had a leisurely 2 hours before my last leg home to Springfield, on GM&O's *Abraham Lincoln*. This train, and its companions *Midnight Special* and the *Limited* (formerly *Alton Limited*), were old reliable hats to me, but as the years have passed, I've found a universal appreciation for GM&O's passenger operation among those friends who I have learned also patronized it. By May 1967, the "Abe" had lost its observation car, but most of the consist was still

a mix from the pair of low-slung, full-width-diaphragm, lightweight trains built by ACF in 1935. (One set was the original *Abraham Lincoln* of GM&O predecessor Alton Railroad; the other was delivered to then-Alton parent B&O as the *Royal Blue*. In 1937, B&O sent that train to the Alton, and it became the *Abe*, with the original *Abe* train becoming the *Ann Rutledge*—got all that?)

GM&O's passenger service, which had a charm and style all its own, main-

Twilight of the parlor car

THESE DAYS, four years doesn't seem like a lot in passenger-train history. But in spring 1967, when I made my Springfield-Denver circle, consider that the Midwest was, surprisingly, still replete with parlor-car service, a mere four years before Amtrak was launched.

A reserved parlor-car seat usually required a first-class ticket, and was the daytime equivalent of a Pullman sleeping-car accommodation. Pullman itself, of course, had operated legions of parlor cars. My itinerary included only one parlor seat, in the Skytop Lounge observation car on Milwaukee's *Morning Hi* [right], but both my first and last trains—IC's *Green Diamond* and GM&O's *Abraham Lincoln*—also offered parlors. IC's service was reduced to weekdays-only, and only between Chicago and Springfield, but both GM&O's "*Abe*" and *Limited* offered it all the way to St. Louis.

The Skytops weren't the only exotic parlor cars left in service. Norfolk & Western still had Chicago-St. Louis parlor service on the former Wabash route on both the *Bauner Blue* and *Blue Bird*, the former in venerable heavyweight open-platform observation cars and the latter in a dome observation lounge. IC's all-first-class *Panama Limited* had a parlor car, offering service between Chicago, Carbondale, and North Cairo, Ill., and between Memphis and New Orleans.

Competing on Chicago-Twin Cities parlor service with the Milwaukee, which had Skytops on both the morning and afternoon *Hi*'s, was the Burlington, with dome parlor cars on both its *Morning* and *Afternoon Twin Zephyrs*. CB&Q also offered parlor seats out of the Windy City on the *Denver Zephyr*, and had parlor seats on the *Nebraska Zephyr* to Lincoln and the *Kansas City Zephyr*, in a diner-parlor car. Rock Island still employed a parlor car on *Peoria Rockets* 12 and 13 between Chicago and what was then Illinois' second-largest city.

Chicago & North Western had a half-parlor, half-lounge bilevel car on the *Flambeau 400* between Chicago and Green Bay, Wis., and Great Northern's *Badger* and *Gopher* between St. Paul and Duluth offered parlor-car service. GN also had parlor service in the Pacific Northwest, on the Seattle-Vancouver *International*, as did Northern Pacific on its Seattle-Portland pool train.

Parlor-car service was still common in 1967 in the heavily trafficked Northeast, very much so on certain routes of the New Haven, Pennsylvania, and Long Island. But in the Midwest, the service was in its final flower, though it enjoyed a brief comeback in the mid-1970's on Amtrak's re-equipped (with ex-CB&Q dome-observations) *Abraham Lincoln*.—J.D.I.



ly relied on heavyweight dining cars and late-1940's "streamstyle" lightweight coaches and parlor cars, all with six-wheel trucks, right to the end—which didn't come until Amtrak's inception. (GM&O's four sleeping cars were of the same ilk, though they were withdrawn at the end of 1967.) The road's attractive red-and-maroon color scheme, with gold accent stripes, was widely held in high regard.

Behind the matched E7A pair of 103 and 103A were two baggage cars, a heavyweight combination baggage coach from the 1920's *Alton Limited*,

and then seven of the 1935 cars: two mid-train parlors, a diner, and four coaches. Only an unexplained 12-minute delay in Ridgely Yard just north of Springfield spoiled an on-time performance. I stepped down onto the brick platform of the downtown depot that still serves Amtrak today at 9 p.m., 10 minutes late, concluding 2716 wonderful miles from Denver (plus 820 beforehand).

Somehow, I doubt if the *Texas Zephyr* and coach-only Rock Island and MoPac plug runs of my "Choice A" could have come close to equaling this experience.

Yes, much of the Choctaw Route trackage is gone, and I've yet to ride the C&S-FW&D south of Pueblo, while there have been numerous opportunities to cover the trackage I rode when I picked my northerly alternative in Denver. There is no doubt in my mind, though, that I chose the right way home. ■

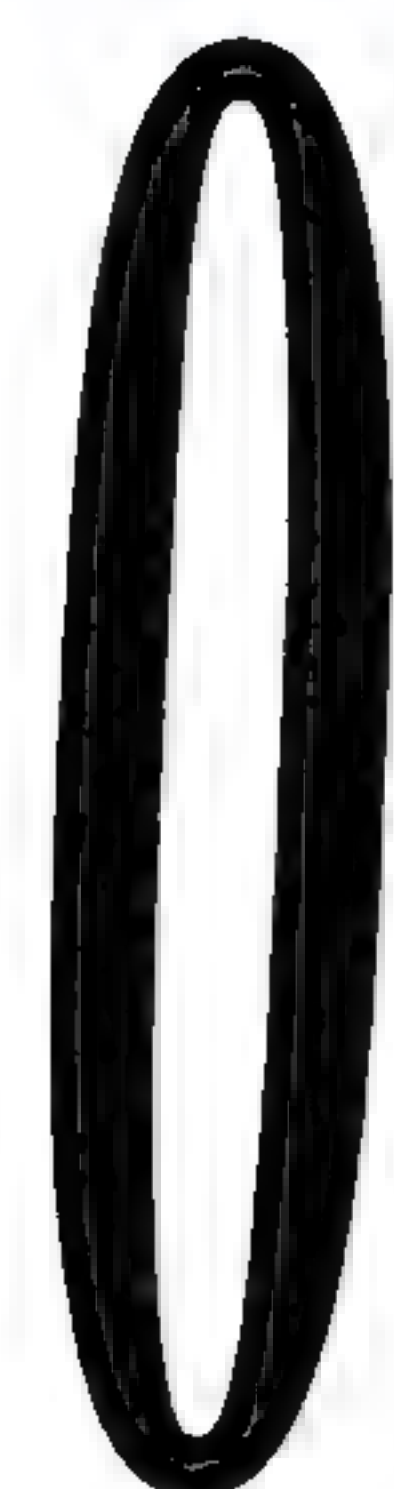
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Complete train consists and timekeeping notes for Dave Ingles' 1967 Denver trip are available on our website, classictrainsmag.com

Thrills and chills on the Milwaukee Road!

Danger Lights is a memorable thriller from Hollywood's talkie era

By Les Hammer



IN A RAIN-SWEPT NIGHT, two young lovers head for the railroad station, hoping to catch the express to Chicago before her fiancé can stop them. Huddled together, the couple makes their way across the flooded tracks. In an interlocking tower overlooking the deserted railroad yard, a lone towerman looks at his watch, then moves a lever. Outside, unaware of their imminent peril, the pair steps across the tracks, just as the remote-controlled switch closes underfoot, trapping the young man between the rails.

"My foot's caught in the switch!" he cries. As he struggles to free himself, a signal changes from red to green. The frightened pair hears the whistle of an approaching train in the distance.

"It's the Limited!" exclaims the terrified girl, clinging to her lover. Will he escape in time?

In 1930, cinema and rail aficionados reveled in the drama and romance of *Danger Lights*, produced by RKO Radio Pictures. But hard-boiled critics complained that the movie was as melodramatic and old-fashioned as *The Great Train Robbery*, made in 1903. After its initial release, *Danger Lights* languished in the film vaults, forgotten by all but a few railfans. In 1958, the neglected film fell into public domain, orphaned by a failing film studio that had been run into the ground by self-styled movie mogul Howard Hughes. At regular intervals, the old movie surfaced on late-night television. In recent years, it turned up in the bargain bins of videocassette dealers, selling for as little as \$10 a tape.

But few viewers knew the fascinating history of this early talkie, filmed on the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad and released in a wide-screen version, or the tragic stories of its star and screenwriter.

In the winter of 1929, an ex-newspaperman and railroad buff named James Ashmore Creelman began work on a screenplay tentatively titled *The Railroad Man*. Creelman, born in 1900, had been working in Hollywood since the early 1920's, banging out scripts for potboilers like *Sinners in Heaven*. The 29-year-old writer was little known outside film circles, but he possessed an inherent sense of drama and a sharp ear for dialogue—traits he had inherited from his late father, James, a respected editor and war correspondent. As a boy, Creelman was probably an avid reader of the wildly popular *Railroad Man's Magazine* (later *Railroad Stories*, then *Railroad Magazine*), filled with railroad lore and true-life stories of heroic engineers, fast locomotives, and violent wrecks.

In the course of several drafts, Creelman crafted the entertaining story of Dan Thorn, a snarling, two-fisted division superintendent with the proverbial heart of gold. After a landslide disrupts rail traffic, Thorn mobilizes a crew to clear the tracks. Short of manpower, he rousts a gang of hoboes from an empty boxcar, where he spots Larry Doyle, an ex-engineer who



THE PAPER GALLERY

Actor Louis Wolheim made a career of his brooding visage. For a scene at the Milwaukee Road's Eagle Nest Tunnel, actors Jean Arthur and Robert Armstrong flirt with danger in front of a Milwaukee 2-8-2. Courtesy Museum of Modern Art.





MUSEUM OF MODERN ART/FILM STILL ARCHIVE

The RKO Pictures film crew prepares for the pivotal action scene on the trestle at Eagle Nest Tunnel overlooking Sixteen Mile Canyon. Years after the railroad was abandoned at this dramatic location, Hollywood returned to film a scene for 1992's *A River Runs Through It*.

had been fired for insubordination. On a whim, Thorn decides to give Doyle a chance and offers him a job as a fireman. In his first day on the job, Doyle meets Mary Ryan, who is engaged to marry Thorn. In due course, the two fall in love.

Realizing their predicament, the young lovers decide to elope and head for the station. While crossing the tracks, Doyle catches his foot in the switch. Unexpectedly, Thorn stumbles upon the pair and threatens to kill Doyle for betraying his trust. At the last minute, Thorn pulls his rival out of the path of an oncoming train, only to be struck by the speeding locomotive. After learning that his benefactor has only five hours to live, the conscience-stricken Doyle volunteers for a "record run" to Chicago, where expert medical help is available. To Doyle's relief, Thorn survives the perilous journey and a subsequent operation. Upon his recovery, Thorn realizes that his real love is, and always will be, the railroad.

Authentic touches abound in James Creelman's story of the triangular love affair, set against the backdrop of a sprawling transcontinental railroad. In one early scene, the scenarist captures the ambience of a noisy, smoke-filled roundhouse, described as a cacophony of "panting engines, hammering boilermakers, bells, and whistles, and testings of air machinery."

In another memorable sequence, the screenwriter describes the mystical bond between man

and machine (though it would not translate well to the screen):

"Dan swings the young man around to show him the great locomotive glittering under the arcs of the roundhouse. For once, the sullenness in the other's eyes gives way to something else—a grudging admiration for the sheer beauty and perfection of this huge machine. Shining surfaces, clean-cut planes—a blending of grace and power to move the heart of any railroad man. Larry goes forward to touch the locomotive tenderly, as a horseman might, *involuntarily*, caress a thoroughbred, then turns away, half-ashamed, again defiant and sullen."

An eye for a good story

One day, a copy of the finished script landed on the desk of William Le Baron, the new head of production at RKO Pictures. A creative, literate executive with an eye for a good story, Le Baron decided to add *The Railroad Man* to his ambitious production slate for 1930. After purchasing the story, the production chief looked over a roster of free-lance directors capable of completing the picture on time and within budget. From the list he picked George B. Seitz, a former actor and playwright who had made his mark as director and producer of the popular *Pearl White* serials. Although he was never considered a great director, the 42-year-old Seitz proved to be a good script

doctor for *The Railroad Man*, cutting lengthy scenes, eliminating superfluous characters, re-writing or transposing dialogue, and, to his lasting credit, deleting a Tin Pan Alley tune "In the Baggage Coach Ahead" (with lugubrious lyrics by Pullman porter Gussie Davis) from the engagement-party sequence. "The audience could only laugh at characters who would listen, *much moved*, to 'In the Baggage Coach Ahead' and I don't think that we would want our characters laughed at," he wrote after reviewing the first draft. "We can laugh *with* them, but not *at* them."

With a budget of \$450,000, Le Baron did not have the luxury of hiring big-name stars for his high-iron drama. But what his actors lacked in charisma, they made up for with their "just folks" looks. Arguably, no one in Hollywood was plainer than Louis Wolheim, who was cast as Dan Thorn. His brute physiognomy had made him one of the best-known character actors in films. Fresh from his triumph as the crusty Corporal Katczinsky in the anti-war classic *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Wolheim owed his fortune to a misshapen nose, the result of an injury while playing halfback on the Cornell University football team. Off screen, he was a gentle, kind-hearted man who, by this time, was showing signs of serious illness.

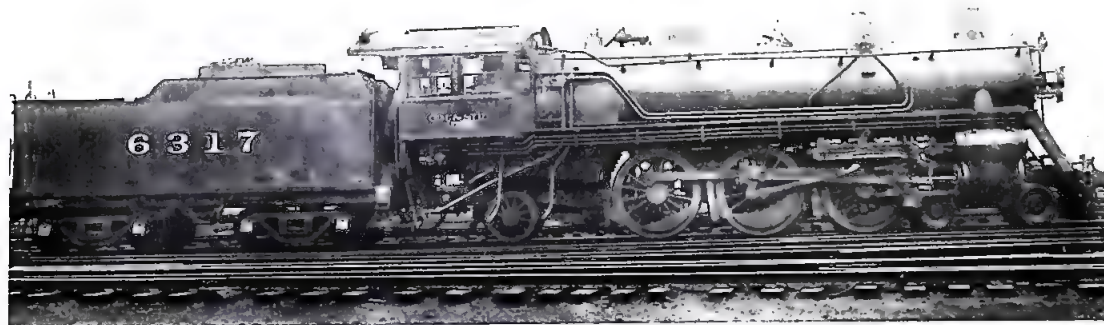
For the part of Larry Doyle, Le Baron cast Robert Armstrong, whose tough-guy persona would carry him through more than 100 movies, including the 1933 thriller *King Kong*. For the role of Mary Ryan, Le Baron negotiated the loan of Jean Arthur, a beautiful Paramount actress who had played in a silent railroad epic *The Block Signal* and starred in the 1930's classics *Mr. Smith Goes*

to Washington and *You Can't Take It with You*.

Rounding out the cast were veteran character actors William Burt, Robert Edeson, James Farley, Alan Roscoe, Frank Sheridan, and, notably, Hugh Herbert (who doubled as dialogue director) as the genteel hobo Weary Willie (renamed The Professor), who is given to lofty pronouncements. "The trouble with labor is the work that's connected with it," he tells his fellow tramps. "Now, I figure that work is for workers. Oh, why bother your head about it?"

For obvious reasons, no railway scenes could be filmed on the back lot of RKO's Gower Street studio. Nor could train sequences be shot on any of the big Los Angeles railroads (Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, and Union Pacific), for none of those roads' local lines fit the requirements of the script. After casting around for a suitable location, the producers contacted Walter St. Clair, a Milwaukee Road sales executive. If they had any reservations about the far-flung location, the voluble St. Clair convinced them that the Milwaukee Road offered authentic locales and natural scenery that could not be duplicated on a back lot or filmed on another railroad. On a map, the Milwaukee extended west from Chicago, skirted lakes and rivers in Wisconsin and Minnesota, crossed the prairies of the Dakotas, snaked through the canyons and gorges of Montana, and stretched across Washington to Puget Sound.

On the morning of May 2, 1930, the cast and crew of *The Railroad Man* boarded a special train in Los Angeles, bound for Montana. The 100-member company included art director Max Rée, cinematographer Karl Struss (who won an Acad-



CLASSIC TRAINS COLLECTION

Sisters to the locomotives featured in the Miles City roundhouse scene are Milwaukee Road 4-6-2 6317, built in 1912, and 2-8-2 8600, a USRA Mikado built in 1918. Both are Brooks products.



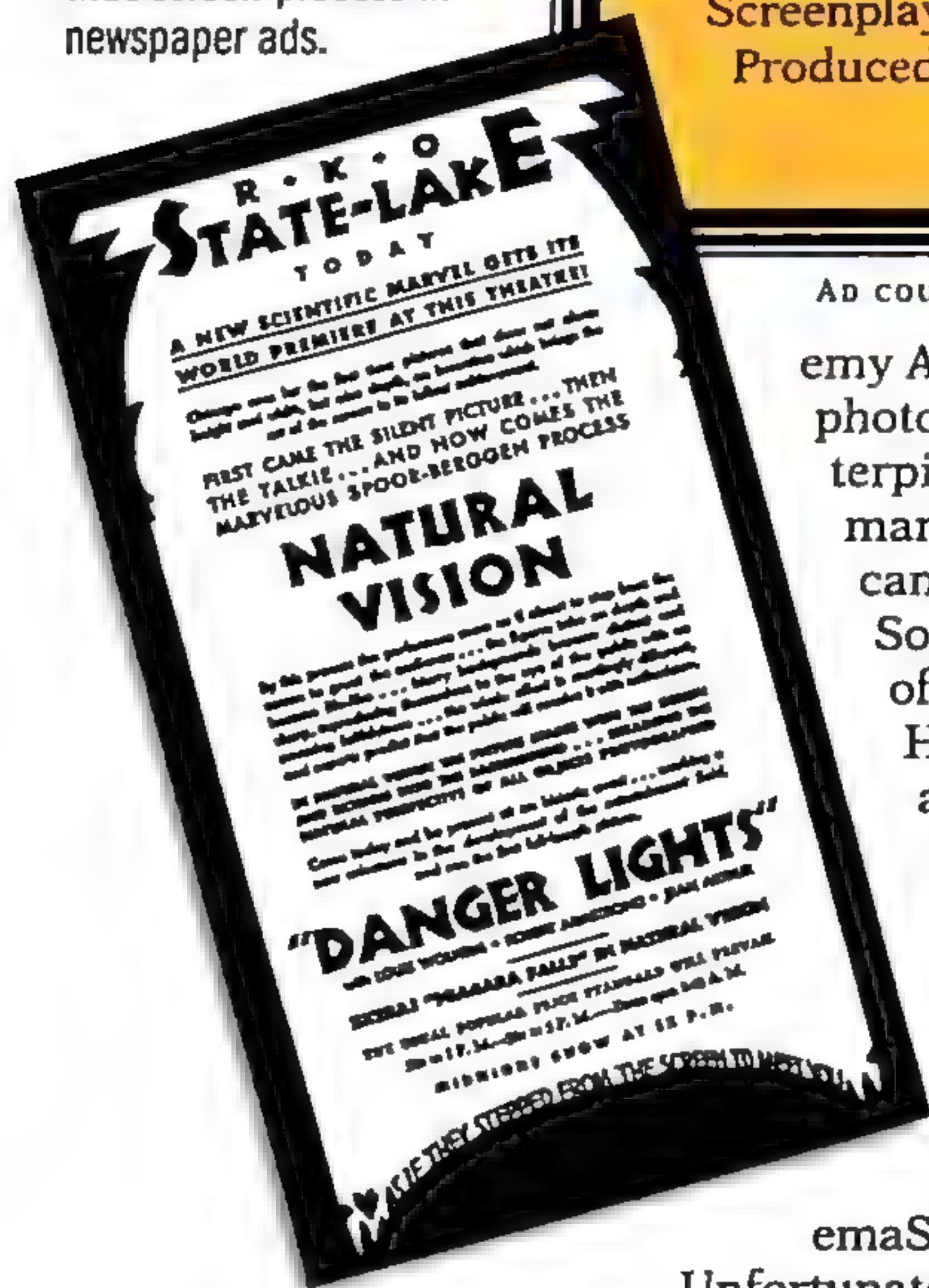
ALCO

The players

Louis Wolheim Dan Thorn
 Jean Arthur Mary Ryan
 Robert Armstrong Larry Doyle
 Frank Sheridan Ed Ryan
 Robert Edeson Engineer
 Hugh Herbert The Professor
 James Farley Joe Geraghty
 Alan Roscoe General Manager
 William Burt Chief Dispatcher
 CMStP&P 4-6-2 6365, 2-8-2 8624,
 2-8-2 8664, business car St. Paul . .
 . . . Themselves

Directed by **George B. Seitz**
 Screenplay by **James A. Creelman**
 Produced by **William Le Baron**

Although not a major film, *Danger Lights* managed to field a creditable cast of Hollywood names. RKO promoted its "Natural Vision" wide-screen process in newspaper ads.



AD COURTESY OF LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

emy Award in 1927 for his luminous photography on F.W. Murnau's masterpiece *Sunrise*), second cameraman John Boyle, and a cadre of camera assistants and operators. Some reports placed the number of cameramen at 16. By this time, Hollywood was in the midst of a brief vogue for wide-screen epics like *The Big Trail*, *Billy the Kid*, and *Under Western Skies*. Studios vied with each other for the exclusive right to new wide-screen processes, such as Grandeur and Realife, that predated CinemaScope by a quarter of a century.

Unfortunately, none of the studios could agree on a format that varied in size from 63mm to 70mm (twice the width of standard 35mm film). After weighing different formats—all of which were expensive—RKO decided to use a 65mm "Natural Vision" process, developed by George Spoor and John Berggren, for their forthcoming production of *The Railroad Man*. Spoor, a former Chicago & North Western engineer and founder of the old Essanay Film Company, had invented a motion picture camera with two lenses that captured images through one aperture. When a nitrate print was struck from the exposed negative, the result was a stereoscopic image that could be projected in standard or wide-screen format. However, the results were not always satisfactory.

Milwaukee Road in the spotlight

But expectations were high on the morning of May 4, 1930, when the RKO special steamed into Miles City, Mont., midway on the Milwaukee's

Trans-Missouri Division. After a few hours of sleep at the Hotel Olive, the cast and crew rose at dawn, ready for the first day of filming. Alone or in groups, the company made its way to the railroad yard, where the director was preparing to shoot scenes in the roundhouse. While actors donned their makeup and wardrobe, studied their lines, or waited for their first call, electricians were installing generators, laying cables, and setting up lights. In the roundhouse, firemen were stoking several locomotives, including No. 6365, a 4-6-2 built in 1910 by the railroad, and No. 8624, a 2-8-2 built in 1918 by American Locomotive Company. "All [of the locomotives featured in *Danger Lights*] ran down to the late 1940's and early 1950's," says Jim Scribbins, a noted Milwaukee Road historian and author, and retired from a career with the railroad.

With his no-nonsense, workmanlike approach to the material, Seitz achieved a realistic, semi-documentary look at a working railroad. In the roundhouse scenes, cameraman Karl Struss backlit the hulking, steaming locomotives for an atmospheric effect. To boost the realism, sound engineer Clem Portman recorded the dialogue of the principals over the cacophonous din of anvils, engine bells, and machinery. For one scene (cut from the final print), Seitz and his intrepid cameraman, flanked by a nervous script girl, hunkered down in an inspection pit. After setting up the shot, Struss trained his camera on a grimy Robert Armstrong, crouched at the other end of the pit with a wrench. When the director called "Action!" an engineer opened the throttle and ran his locomotive into the stall, directly over the fearless actor.

After completing the roundhouse and yard sequences on May 7, the company packed up its equipment and took a train to Sixteen Mile Canyon, east of Lombard, Mont. In this rugged, snake-infested canyon, Seitz filmed the opening scene, where Dan Thorn musters a wrecking crew to clear the tracks after a landslide (a miniature shot by special-effects cameraman Lloyd Knechtel). After finishing the landslide sequence, Seitz and his crew moved all of their cameras and equipment to Eagle Nest Tunnel, overlooking Sixteen Mile Creek. On the trestle leading to the tunnel, the director shot scenes of Larry Doyle and Mary Ryan strolling on the tracks, under the catenary wires, and stepping onto a barrel platform just as 2-8-2 No. 8664 roars out of the tunnel. (Although a number of scenes were shot in the electrified territory west of Harlowton, Mont., only steam locomotives—far more dramatic than their electric counterparts—appear on camera.)

Delighted by the free publicity, the Milwaukee Road blazoned its canted red emblem on all of its featured locomotives and rolling stock. A number of employees, with little or no acting experience, caught the eye of the casting director. Arnold Running found himself playing a harried clerk in Dan Thorn's office, while J.J. Foley landed a featured role as the assistant general manager. Other workers more or less played themselves. In roundhouse and yard sequences, boilermak-

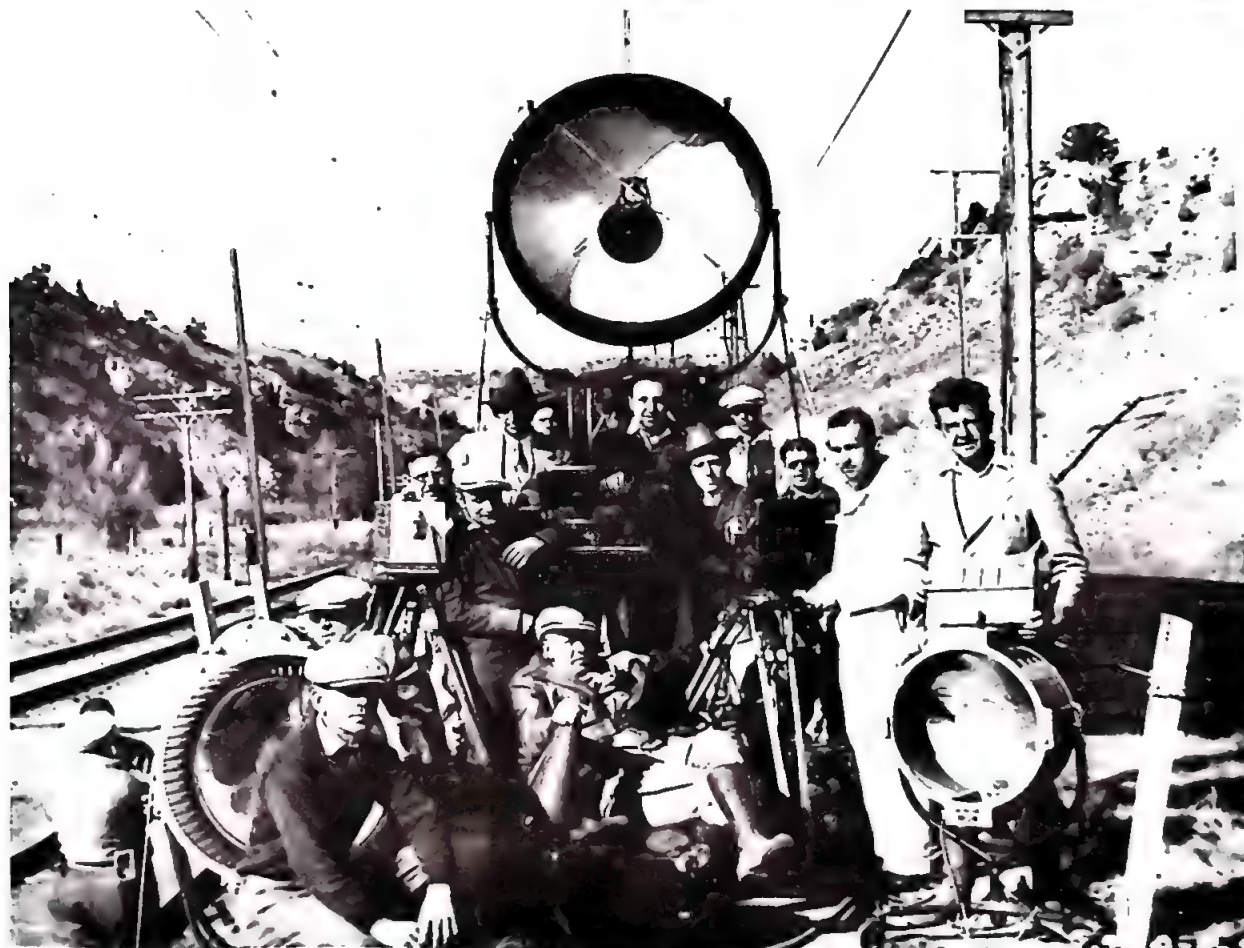
ers, mechanics, steamfitters, and yardmen all went about their normal routines as cameras rolled.

Generally speaking, the producers strove for accuracy in their depiction of everyday life on the railroad. However, they took dramatic license when studio carpenters built two realistic-looking sets, depicting the interiors of the interlocking tower and the superintendent's office, on the roof of the Miles City roundhouse and storehouse. On shooting days, the actors and crew climbed a 100-foot ladder to reach the lighted sets, overlooking the railroad tracks. "The interlocking towers were fake," says Scribbins. "There is not and never was an interlocking tower in Sixteen Mile Canyon. It's pure fiction."

On May 18, the company returned to Miles City for additional scenes, including the washout sequence leading up to Dan Thorn's near-fatal injury. By one account, 2000 people turned out each night to watch the shooting in and around the yards. Eager for a better view, spectators clambered on roofs, climbed up telephone poles, or stood on the grounds. For the washout scene, set during a downpour, the Miles City Fire Department trained hoses over the actors, who were wearing raincoats and slickers. For local reporters and townspeople alike, the effect was magical, as the Miles City *Daily Star* reported:

"The washout scene is especially interesting. We watched it across a small ravine. Riprap work of sand bags, fallen trees, rocks, and debris were placed in a cut and a torrent of water played

across the tracks at this point from an unseen length of hose; men in slickers and rain hats working with axes, picks, and shovels in the downpour of rain trying to repair the damaged track seemed so realistic that we could scarcely believe that it was only a picture in the making. Huge Kleig lights played upon the scene from all



A caboose and water tanks (above) share the movie set with actors, extras, crew, and Kleig lights at Miles City, Mont. Out on the main line, the crew poses with the camera car used to create some of *Danger Lights*' memorable action scenes.

BOTH PHOTOS: ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

sides, illuminating the workers, while the cameras were wheeled back and forth from points on the sidelines by means of small trucks upon which they are mounted."

Prior to the completion of filming in Miles City, Milwaukee Road organizers hosted several events for their Hollywood visitors, including a baseball game to benefit the local YMCA. On May 25, 1200 fans turned out to watch the star-studded event. Armstrong, a former boxer for the University of Washington, played first base for the RKO team, managed by associate producer Myles Connolly, while Wolheim and his lovely co-star Jean Arthur (who was too late to throw the first pitch) watched from the stands. But the Hollywood boys proved to be no match for the hometown sluggers, who walloped them by a score of 12-5.

The dash to Chicago

On June 1, Seitz began filming the climactic record run, where Larry Doyle mounts a special train to take Dan Thorn to Chicago. The complex but cinematically exciting sequence began at the Miles City depot, where Seitz shot scenes of Thorn being carried aboard the general manager's car ("played" by Milwaukee Road business car *St. Paul*). Filming continued at Lombard, where the speeding train crossed the Missouri River and passed the famed *Olympian* stopped in a siding.

For the Chicago run, RKO used a specially constructed camera car, coupled to another engine running just ahead of the special. In one sequence (shot from a camera mounted on the side of the lo-

comotive), engineer Doyle senses that a bearing on the trailing truck is running hot. A stunt double for Armstrong climbs out of the cab with an oil can, opens the journal box cover, and oils the bearing.

Filming for the Chicago run ended at historic Chicago Union Station. On arrival, camera crews filmed scenes of the special train pulling into the north end of the station, which served the Milwaukee Road. Location work finished with atmospheric shots of arriving and departing passengers inside the soaring concourse.

In mid-June, the RKO company returned to Hollywood to complete filming, including interior scenes in the Ryan house. On June 23, 1930, Seitz finished the last pickup shots for *The Railroad Man*. Like most films, the RKO production went through several working titles, including *The Stalwart* and *The Record Run*. After months of wrangling, the New York office approved the evocative title *Danger Lights*, suggestive of lanterns and wayside signals found on the railroad.

On August 21, 1930, *Danger Lights* opened at selected theatres, including the RKO St. Louis—a common practice in a monopolistic era when major studios like Fox, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Warner Brothers owned their own chains of theatres. Unfortunately, the railroad drama attracted little attention from Midwestern audiences, forcing RKO to withdraw the new picture after its initial release. But encouraging developments in the Spoor-Berggren process prompted the studio to present *Danger Lights* in a wide-screen version, which premiered on November 15, 1930, at the

On the north side of Chicago Union Station, Larry Doyle (Robert Armstrong) consoles Mary Ryan (Jean Arthur) as medics take the injured Dan Thorn (Louis Wolheim, on the gurney) to the hospital.



EDDIE BRANDT'S SATURDAY MATINEE



MILWAUKEE ROAD

RKO State-Lake Theatre in Chicago. At its first screening, RCA and Spoor engineers huddled in the projection booth, watching eight reels unwind, one by one, on a \$22,000 projector (which required three men to operate) and waiting for the results of their cinematic experiment.

"There were a number of momentary blanks on the switchovers, but in general the celluloid behaved and the mechanism purred serenely," noted the sharp-eyed critic for *Variety*. "In the exteriors, with distant vistas of mountain and valley, locomotives puffing and groaning up inclines, or roaring, throttle open, down the Bessemer turnpike, the wide film is most effective. There can be no question that Natural Vision is a step forward in motion picture photography."

After the last screening of *Danger Lights* at the Mayfair Theatre in New York, RKO abandoned the Spoor-Berggren process because of its high cost. In the deepening Depression, few theatre owners could afford to install wide-screen projectors when box-office receipts were falling and theatres were going dark.

On January 8, 1931, *Danger Lights* opened in Los Angeles and other major cities. Owing to economic conditions, the picture generally played for one week on a double bill before it was withdrawn. By this time, Wolheim—who had been plagued by recurring abdominal pain throughout the filming of *Danger Lights*—was too ill to attend local screenings and would die of stomach cancer on February 18, 1931—six weeks before his first

directorial effort, *The Sin Ship*, hit the screen.

James Creelman, author of *Danger Lights*, later wrote scripts for other thrillers, including *King Kong*, *The Most Dangerous Game*, and *The Last Days of Pompeii*. But he was beginning to suffer from working in the factory-like studio environs, where respected writers like William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Nathanael West were little more than well-paid hacks. By 1940, Creelman had traded the comforts of Hollywood for a precarious existence in New York, where he tried his hand as a dramatist. Sadly, none of his plays was ever produced. On September 9, 1941, the frustrated playwright committed suicide by leaping from the roof garden of his 18-story apartment building. He was 40 years old.

Although it was not and never will be considered a great film, *Danger Lights* is at once an entertaining yarn of life on the railroad, a priceless record of the now-defunct Milwaukee Road, and a timeless story that, 70 years later, "sings of trains and the men who run them." ■

With its distinctive open-air sightseeing car bringing up the rear and a box-car electric up front, the *Olympian*, Milwaukee Road's famed Chicago-Seattle train, poses for a publicity photo near Eagle Nest Tunnel.

classictrainsmag.com

Video copies of *Danger Lights* are available from Trainfans, Inc., (800) 258-4546. To view exciting scenes from the 1930 railroad thriller, visit the CLASSIC TRAINS website: classictrainsmag.com





Southern's streamlined Ps-4 Pacific was the best of a great breed

By Curt Tillotson Jr.

IN A WARM SUMMER AFTERNOON in June 1948, when I was 11 years old, I encountered the steam locomotives that would change my life.

My family had traveled from our hometown of Oxford, N.C., to Durham to shop, have dinner, and take in a movie. As usual, upon arrival my parents dropped me off at Durham's stately Union Station.

My parents knew no matter how long they stayed in the "Bull City," when it was time to leave they could find me at the station, watching the action provided by Southern Railway, Norfolk & Western, and Seaboard Air Line.

Shortly after sundown I heard a melodious whistle off to

the east, warning all to "look out, I'm coming through!" Soon I heard sharp stack-talk as a beautiful green-and-gold Southern Ps-4 Pacific came into view, pulling the nine cars of train 13, a daily Goldsboro-Greensboro passenger, mail, and express local. The engineer seemed to be an impatient hogger—he did not shut off his throttle and begin braking for the station until the last moment. Still, it was a very smooth stop. What a throttle artist!

About 10 minutes later I heard the shrill communication whistle go off in the cab of the big 4-6-2—*peep . . . peep*. Then two short *whup! whups!* emerged from the engine's huge whistle, followed by the *ding! ding! ding!* of the engine

Queen of the First Ladies

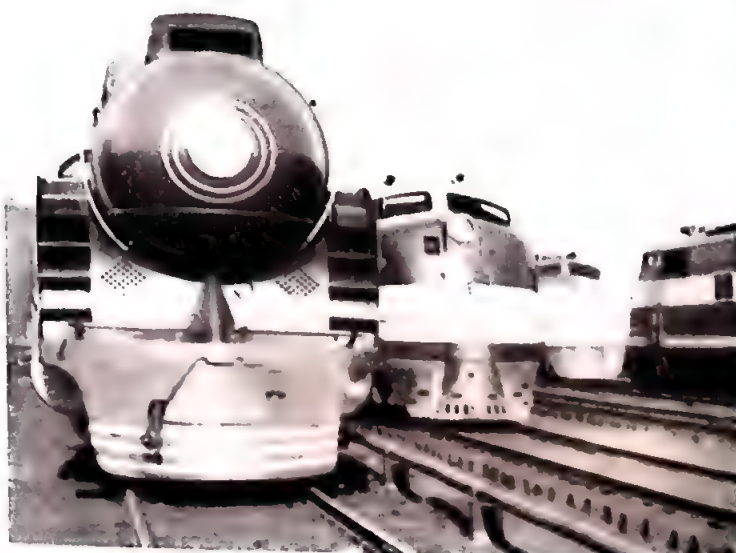


CURT THOMPSON COLLECTION

Her 11-year-old streamlining still intact despite her imminent retirement, Southern Ps-4 1380 roars away from the depot at Reidsville, N.C. (above), with mail and express train 11 on August 29, 1952. In a 1942 photo (right), the recently streamlined 4-6-2 shares the ready tracks at Washington Union Station's Ivy City roundhouse with new Electro-Motive passenger diesels of competitor carriers Seaboard Air Line, at center, and Atlantic Coast Line.

bell. Next came one soft *whuf!* followed by a great "snap" from that graphite-finish smokestack; before I could swallow the lump in my throat, the impatient engineer really had No. 13 leaving town—I mean *really* leaving town! By the time the last coach passed, the Ps-4 had developed a staccato rhythm that sounded like a machine gun. Several minutes passed before I could move, before that last deep whistle came from far off to the west.

Thus was I introduced to Southern's renowned Ps-4. I was never the same after this hypnotic encounter with one of railroading's most attractive locomotives. I was hooked on trains. And my love for Southern steam power, and, in



FRANK CIODELLER



MIKE RUNEY

particular, the Ps-4, would be rekindled time after time in my dad's hometown of Greer, S.C., on the busy Washington-Atlanta main line. And one very special Ps-4—No. 1380—would stand out above all the rest. Dressed in a sleek shroud, she would become the Queen of Southern's First Ladies.

By the early 1920's the Pacific type was the standard passenger locomotive on the Southern. But as traffic grew, the railroad's 12- to 14-car passenger trains became too long and, at 1000-plus tons, too heavy for the existing P, Ps-1, and Ps-2 engines. The railroad's T-class Mountains held their own, but Southern wanted to concentrate the 4-8-2's in and around mountain-area terminals such as Asheville, N.C., and Knoxville, Tenn. Doubleheading of the light Pacifics was not

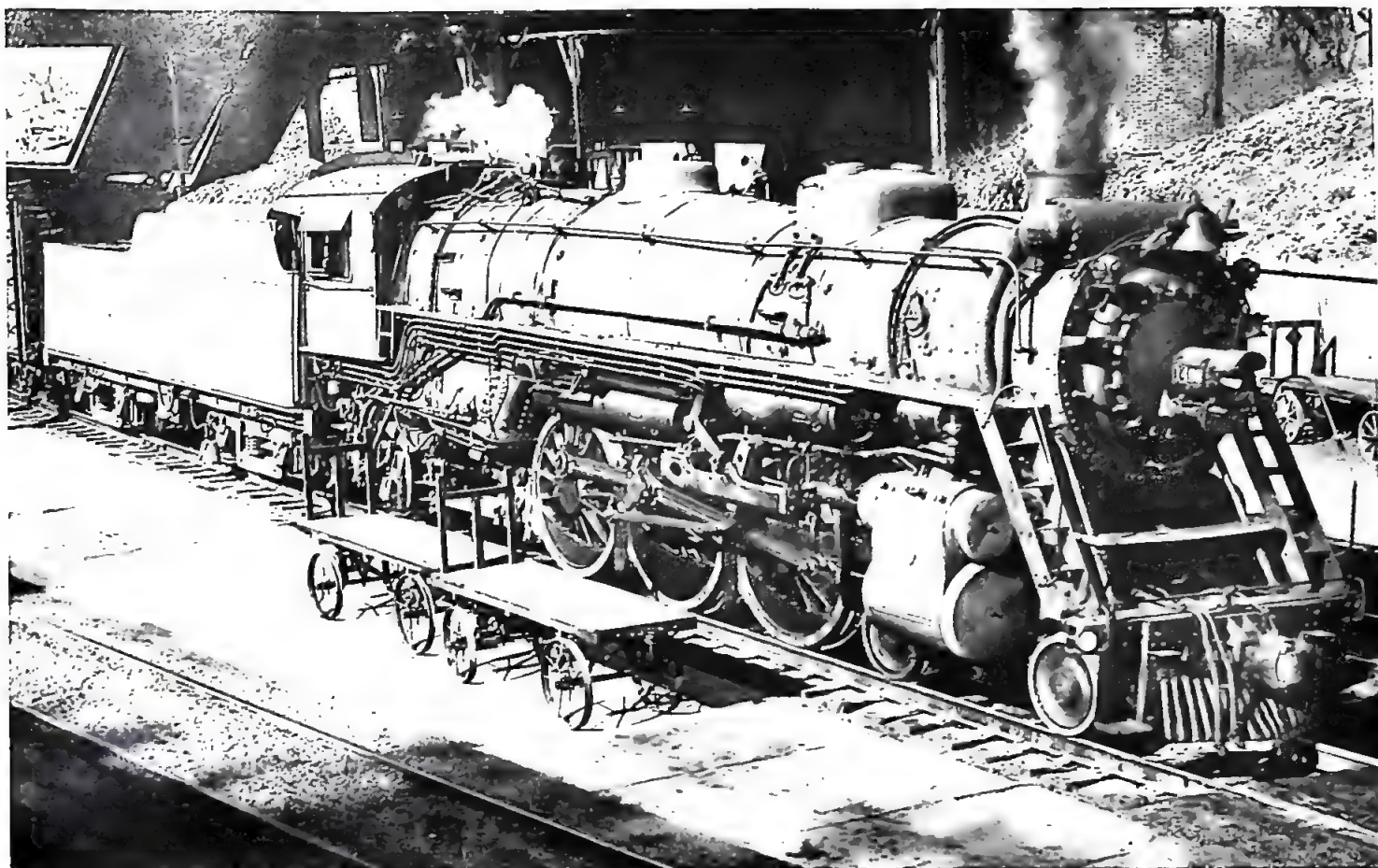
A Ps-4 has Southern train 39 (above) rolling through Richland, N.C., on the Washington-Atlanta main line in 1951. Heading up the gleaming new streamliner *Tennessean* (below), specially selected Ps-4 1380 shows off its new Otto Kuhler styling under catenary at Washington Union Station in 1941.

desirable. What Southern needed was an engine that could easily handle these heavy trains at, say, 80 mph. Southern decided it was time for a more powerful 4-6-2, the Ps-4 class.

In 1923 Southern ordered 12 USRA-design heavy 4-6-2's from American Locomotive Co.'s Schenectady plant. These first Ps-4's included a dozen, 1375-1386, assigned to the Southern proper, and four, 6684-6687, assigned to subsidiary Alabama Great Southern. The dozen proved so successful



FRANK CLODFELTER COLLECTION



H. STAFFORD BRYANT JR.

In the waning years of SR steam, green-and-gold Ps-4 1408 of the 1928 Baldwin class pauses at Lynchburg, Va., with a southbound mail train.

that in 1924 the road ordered 15 more from Schenectady, SR 1366-1374 and 1387-1392, plus 6471-6475 for subsidiary Cincinnati, New Orleans & Texas Pacific.

In 1926 the railway ordered 23 more Ps-4's, this time from American's Richmond Works: SR 1393-1404, CNO&TP 6476-6482, and AGS 6888-6891. These beautiful "Harrison engines" were colorful, the first to feature Southern's famous green with gold striping and lettering. The engines were accented by nickel-plated cylinder and valve covers; light-graphite smokeboxes; white tires, hubs, and running boards; and crimson cab roofs. The Elesco feedwater heater placed in front of the smokestack provided a finishing touch.

The colors traced to a trip to England taken in 1925 by Southern President Fairfax Harrison, who saw green and gold locomotives of both the Southern Railway of England and the London & North Eastern. So impressed was he with these polished, colorful engines that he decided to use the same colors on the next batch of Ps-4's from Richmond. The livery became so popular that, ultimately, all Southern passenger power, including the light P-class 4-6-2's as well as the 4-8-2's, would wear it.

A final 10 Ps-4's were built in 1928 by Baldwin: SR 1405-1409 and CNO&TP 6482-6486. Their basic specifications were the same as all other Ps-4's: Baker valve gear, 27x28-inch cylinders, 73-inch drivers, 200 psi boiler pressure, 70.5 square feet of grate area, engine weight of 304,000 pounds, and tractive effort of 45,000 pounds.

One of the original 1923 Schenectady Ps-4's was destined for additional honors. In 1941, Southern decided to rename and re-equip the *Memphis Special* as a new Washington-

Memphis streamliner, the *Tennessean*. This also was the year Southern got its first FT diesels from Electro-Motive. The *Tennessean* and two other Southern trains from Washington, the *Birmingham Special* and the *Pelican*, used Norfolk & Western's line, and steam power, between Lynchburg, Va., and Bristol, Tenn., where they returned to Southern rails.

Since the Washington-Lynchburg leg was too short for economical use of the FT's, Southern decided to use steam on the *Tennessean* between Washington and Lynchburg, and diesels west of Bristol. For the Washington leg the railway selected Ps-4 No. 1380, and in a break with tradition, decided to streamline it, hiring famed industrial designer Otto Kuhler to work on the project. What came out of Southern's Spencer (N.C.) Shops was a sight to behold: 1380, truly the "Queen of the First Ladies of the Pacifics," resplendent in green, gold, and white, bullet nose, and judicious striping.

For nearly a decade, the 1380 did most of the hauling of the stainless-steel *Tennessean* through the rolling hills of Virginia. When the Washington Division dieselized in the late 1940's, 1380 was bumped from the streamliner and placed in pool service with other 4-6-2's. Although it kept its shroud and *Tennessean* lettering, 1380 was assigned to secondary Lynchburg-Atlanta runs. The Pacific was retired from regular service at Spencer in 1952 and scrapped in Baltimore the next year.

One Ps-4 survives, of course: 1401 of the 1926 Richmond class, placed on display in 1962 at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. New generations of visitors can get an idea of what it was like to see these magnificent, colorful engines roaring along the Washington-Atlanta main line pulling some of the finest trains in the nation. I'm thankful I had the opportunity to see and remember these wonderful locomotives. ■

Great Photographers



Jim Shaughnessy: self-taught master



By night and by day, on roads big and small, this photographer has produced a vivid record of the railroad and its environment

By John Gruber • Photos by Jim Shaughnessy

ALTHOUGH HE LIVED IN TROY, N.Y., only 25 miles from New York Central's busy four-track main line, Jim Shaughnessy's interests "gravitated" to smaller, rural railroads. That meant single-track routes, branch lines, and scenic venues, especially in Vermont and eastern Canada.

He is best known for early night photography, shots of people in roundhouses and shops, and

books on the Rutland and Delaware & Hudson railroads. But there is far more to the story of how this self-taught photographer moved from his first published efforts in the 1950's to recognition by the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society in 1987.

Shaughnessy remains active in his avocation, railroad photography, but he retired in 1995 from his profession, civil engineering. A 1955 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute gradu-

Central Vermont's *Washingtonian* stands under the old trainshed at St. Albans, Vt. The 1963 demolition of the shed left the adjacent office building looking "like Santa Claus without his beard," says Shaughnessy.





New England pastoral: Cows amble away from the track as St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County GE 70-tonners roll an eastbound train through the covered bridge just west of Hardwick, Vt.

Big country, big power: A Union Pacific 4-8-4 Big Boy blasts through a deep cut just east of Dale Junction, Wyo., with westbound reefers. Shaughnessy made three trips to catch the show on Sherman Hill.

ate, he worked for the New York State Department of Transportation, then taught engineering at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy for 10 years, was field and project engineer for a consulting engineering firm for 20 years, and spent the last 5 years of his career as director of environmental health for Rensselaer County.

He began taking railroad photos in the late 1940's. "After the war, there was a big transition on the railroads—not only from steam to diesel but abandonments and mergers. Sometimes you don't realize something was getting old and worth recording until it was gone. That was my thinking in some respects, even in regard to the New York Central's Hudsons, which by most people's acclaim were some of the greatest locomotives ever built. There were so many of them, all grubby looking, and they would flash by, helter skelter, on the four-track main not far from Troy," he recalls.

Shaughnessy attributes his introduction to railroading to an uncle who worked for the D&H as a valve setter before becoming an insurance engineer. "He inspected pressure vessels and things like that. As a teenager, sometimes I would go with him for the day, and we ultimately stopped at railroad places. He had knowledge of the railroad and

interest in it, in fact. Then for some reason it became apparent that I ought to photograph some of these things. I can't really pin down why, but that's how it started," Shaughnessy says.

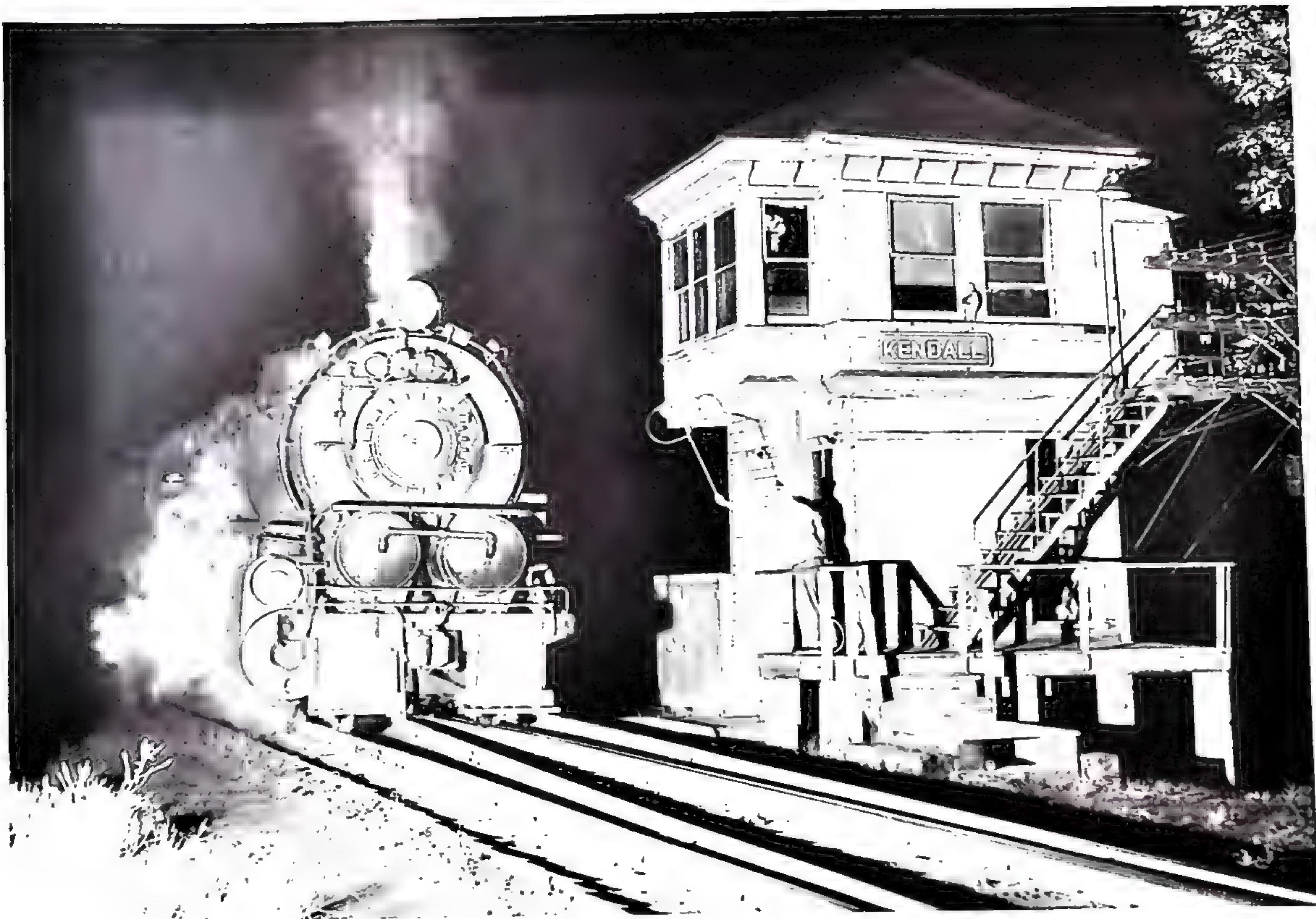
Right after World War II, while he was in high school, Shaughnessy got a 35mm camera, a Kodak 35. "I saw the results of that being less than adequate, so I bought a 2¼x3½ Busch press camera, then a 4x5 Graphic. Over the years, I've used a Rollicord and Rolliflex and several Nikons. I have also used a Mamiya 6x7cm camera for black-and-white work, which I haven't done too much of lately.

"One of my high-school teachers was into photography, and I worked with him in the darkroom to learn about developing and printing, and I just carried on from there in my own darkroom." Shaughnessy's only formal photography training came at a weekend program of the Nikon School of Photography.

He started in photography by looking at magazines and getting ideas for composition. "Railroad magazine was popular, but TRAINS was more interesting for a photographer. The way I approach a photo even now is, I visualize how it looks as a print, or conceivably in a magazine. This gives me the concept in the field of how I want to take it."







Finding something to shoot for

At first, he was making a record for his personal remembrance. "Then came the realization that these commonplace scenes were passing and if I didn't photograph them now, there never would be any photographs." Somewhere in the middle of all that, he began to have publications in mind as well. His first published photo, in March 1955 *TRAINS*, was of a Mount Washington Cog Railway train.

Shaughnessy got more serious about photography after he had an outlet. "It sort of gradually happens. I think the major catalyst is when you find a purpose for the photos, other than piling them up somewhere. Nowadays that purpose for people is in slide shows and sharing slides with one another. That really wasn't so much the case in the 1950's, because you didn't sit and shuffle through a pile of prints like you would a slide show."

Shaughnessy came to know the D&H because it served Troy, where he was born and raised. "The D&H was interesting in that from Mechanicville south, it was quite a heavy-duty railroad in the sense that it had the 4-6-6-4 articulateds and heavy tonnage. North of the Albany area, it was kind of a rural railroad, winding along the shore of Lake Champlain and into the mountains with several

branches." He went on to write major books on the D&H and the Rutland, and he penned a tribute to the D&H for our Summer 2001 issue.

Night work with open flash, a new dimension to railroad photography in the 1950's, "just sort of evolved" for Shaughnessy. "I had seen some of that work in the magazines by Dick Steinheimer and Phil Hastings, who used mostly existing light.

"I developed a knack for, and an interest in, open flash exposures, whereas other people weren't into it so much. This was an extension of the daylight work, and it turned out to be quite widely accepted, because it was a different approach.

"Usually what I did was put the camera on a tripod at a particular location that would capture the scene, being careful not to have any lights facing the lens. I would open the camera shutter, then walk around, being careful not to get in the camera view, and set off the flashes with a hand-held flash-gun. Sometimes if I were working with a friend, I would take the dark slide out of the Graphic, tip it up on the bed in front of the lens. If a long time was going to be needed to get to a location to set off the flash, I would holler to my friend, he would tip down the dark slide; the flash would go off, he would tip it back up. That way there wouldn't be

A Pennsylvania 2-10-0 looms out of the night at Southport Yard (Elmira), N.Y. The Kendall tower operator braces himself to hand up orders to the crew in this September 1956 scene.

In one of Shaughnessy's favorite compositions (opposite page), Rio Grande slim-gauge Mikado 488 treads the dual-gauge trackage out of Antonito, Colo., with a freight for Alamosa in August 1963.



P. R. "Percy" Fonda, train director at Boston & Maine's Johnsonville (N.Y.) tower, is on duty during second trick on October 22, 1955. He's using the phone, but the telegraph keys and sounder suggest he's fluent in Morse, too.

On a cold February 11, 1956, Canadian Pacific 2-8-2's urge a train out of Cookshire, Quebec, on the Saint John-Montreal main line. Despite the gusto with which they're attacking their task, the Mikes are as much a part of history as the local coal dealer's draft horses.

excessive ambient light bleeding into the negative."

Shaughnessy has helped people with dozens of books, starting with Lucius Beebe. "Beebe was the father of the railroad book as we know it today, in my opinion. He started out with *High Iron* and so on, which now look kind of mundane, but when you consider they were the first, it was really a breakthrough. The later books, when he got connected with Howell-North, set the pace for the field as we know it today. By that time, the early 1960's, I had a number of pictures featured in various places, primarily *TRAINS* magazine. Beebe would write me and ask, 'I'd like to use this, that, or the other one.'"

Shaughnessy suggested a book about night photography, which became *Night Train* (Pacific Railway Journal, 1961), edited by Donald Duke. "He liked the idea. I had covered mostly the Northeast and Colorado. He wanted to broaden it out to appeal to people around the country, which was good. He solicited some other photographers; he put it together under his name as editor. I did a section about night photography. That was really my first book effort.

"By the time the Rutland went out of business in 1961 and '62, I had pictures in a number of

Howell-North books. Morgan North asked me, 'Would it be possible to do a book on the Rutland?' At that time, the Rutland was popular. It was only the second railroad of any size to go out of business, the first being the New York, Ontario & Western. I thought, gee, I think it could, because I had a number of photos myself. Along with friends Bob Collins, Phil Hastings, John Picket, and others, plus older stuff I had copied over the years, I was able to put together a pretty decent package, and it worked out well." The book was published in 1964, and a second edition in 1981.

Delaware & Hudson (1967) evolved from the Rutland book, also with Howell-North. "A lot of people tell me they liked the Rutland book the best, but I liked the D&H because it was such a prosperous and diverse operation. And there was a decent amount of material available. That was, in a way, my favorite."

Again, he had material of his own, supplemented by photos from others. "I had the opportunity to show some people in the higher echelon of the D&H the Rutland book. 'I would like to do something similar on the D&H. It wouldn't cost you folks anything. All you need to do is give me permission to have access to what material you have.'





It's March 16, 1957, and the Nickel Plate Road is still overhauling Berkshires at its Conneaut (Ohio) backshop. But soon the tools used for steam repairs would fall silent, leaving engines half finished, and putting men out of work.

At that time, the D&H still had what they called their Reproduction Department, which was the depository of all the company's old materials."

Shaughnessy soon earned the trust of Mildred Foley, who ran the department. "It got to the point where she let me go through and look at stuff. I was entrusted to borrow the 8x10 celluloid negatives. I'd bring them home and print them, bring them back and get some more. It was fortunate, because a lot of that material had deteriorated into a jelly-like pulp or a powder. I know that some of the ones I used were not going to last much longer. That may have been, in some instances, the last prints that were made from those negatives."

Shaughnessy's search for steam

As steam vanished from North America's railroads, Shaughnessy sought it out. He even traveled to Mexico twice. "It was like stepping back in time, going to the narrow gauge in Mexico. They also still had some mainline steam around Mexico City. I went across Canada once on the train. I have been to California, Sherman Hill, Colorado's narrow gauge, and in 46 of the states and 9 of the 10 Canadian provinces.

"But the other significant area I dealt with is the

eastern townships of Quebec east of Montreal. A long-time friend, Sanborn ["Sandy"] Worthen, lived in Montreal, but his ancestral home was in Ayes Cliff, 100 miles east of Montreal, halfway between Sherbrooke and Newport, Vt. During my college days, I would go up there for weekends, especially in winter. Washington's Birthday was a good time because, before the St. Lawrence Seaway was built, the port of Montreal would be closed in the winter. CP would ship grain to Saint John, New Brunswick, for export on their line, which ran out of Montreal across northern Maine and into Saint John. The traffic would increase 700 or 800 percent. The line crossed a series of north-south valleys, while going east-west. Each train would have doubleheaded steam, because of the grades in and out of those valleys, and there would be a train on every passing siding. It was really like shooting fish in a barrel."

Shaughnessy quietly declines to name his best pictures. "Other people have to judge that. It's like art—and art is in the eye of the beholder. Some pictures I thought were great, but editors sent them back to me. So therefore I obviously am not the judge in that case. It depends on your likes, your purposes, and what you are trying to illustrate.



"I have favorites, there is no question. I like pictures with people in them or something, not contrived, that capture a moment in time. There is more to it than just the locomotive. The station scenes, the countryside, umpteen million possibilities. This is why I still take pictures, and I go to the same places sometimes. I still like train photography, because it is an opportunity to get out in the countryside. It is never really the same because you can have different locomotives or weather conditions or different times of the year, different lighting, and different angles. So although you could take a number of pictures at a given location, they all would not all necessarily be the same.

"I loved to go into an engine terminal, just wander around, not even have any plan. Every five minutes it was an entirely different setup. They'd move engines, bringing this one out to coal it. Even in the case of the diesels, switch them around, put units together. That's all activity that is really interesting, certainly part of the everyday activity required.

"I like to get some framing into photos, like a tree branch or switchstand, or something to give it a sort of a frame as well as a perspective. This then relegates the train itself to become not the main portion of the picture but an integral part of the

total. In that respect, that seems to be the approach to train photography now taken by many.

"You can't make a living at it in this business, at least not in this area. I have done photography for my own satisfaction. I got some recognition out of it, and I appreciated that. The Railway & Locomotive Historical Society gave me the award for photography in 1987. But mostly, I just like to be considered as one of the photographers who have recorded a thrilling period of railroading in this country."

The R&LHS was not so modest. In a citation praising his "evocative night photography," it said that one of Shaughnessy's specialties "has been the locomotive in its industrial context of shop and terminal, with its human context of crew and mechanic. Jim's ability to establish rapport with crews often contributed to the human storytelling in many of his pictures; people in Jim's photographs are not just decorative elements but are part and parcel of the whole."

With 80,000 black-and-white negatives and 60,000 color slides, Jim Shaughnessy indeed has a significant body of work—a tribute to his continuing search for creative views of railroading in the last half of the 20th century. ■

After steam had gone from the U.S. and Canada, Shaughnessy made two trips to Mexico to track it down. Inter-oceanic Railway No. 76, a narrow-gauge 2-8-0 built by Baldwin in 1900 as a Vauclain compound, is seen at the San Lazaro engine-house in Mexico City.

Artist's license in Austin

UTORM CLOUDS billow overhead as Missouri Pacific trains congregate in Austin, Texas. An F7 and its train are in the clear for Alco PA's with the northbound *Texas Eagle*, rolling off the Colorado River bridge and nearing the station. Beyond, a GP7 works the Southern Pacific interchange tracks.

Artist John Winfield based this painting of the MP at its 1950's best on a photo by J. Parker Lamb. Winfield followed the photo closely, but took a couple of liberties, adding the Texaco gas station in the background and changing the E7's on the *Eagle* to PA's.

Looking at the results—MP eagle spread wide across 8031's flat nose, grilled casing around the upper headlight housing, black smoke mingling with the thunderheads—it's hard to quibble with this bit of artistic license.—R.S.M.





PAINTING BY JOHN WINFIELD

Hot train

and the value of a dollar



When a young Union Pacific fireman benefited from his veteran hogger's experience in more ways than one

By Les Clark

THE PHONE RANG as I was re-varnishing my bamboo fishing pole in preparation for a short trip to the Snake River near my home in Glens Ferry, Idaho. It was late August 1953, and I had just established my seniority date as a locomotive fireman for Union Pacific. I was awaiting a call for the extra board. With excitement, I answered the phone and was told I was called for the Extra 3823 East Helper for 1:30 p.m. "Who is my engineer?" I asked. The reply: "Elmer Williams."

Known as "The Big E," Elmer was a bear of a man and the local union head for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. I had made a student trip with Elmer and found him to be a good engineer and reasonably helpful, but very demanding. I was therefore a bit nervous, but I consoled myself with

the thought that I shouldn't be able to get in too much trouble on an "East Hill" helper job. These jobs usually helped 17 miles eastward from Glens Ferry to a siding and wye named Ticeska at the top of the Snake River Gorge. Sometimes, if the train was particularly hot, the helper would go on 50 miles to Shoshone and return.

Though I had plenty of time to get ready, I was still excited about the newness of it all. I hurriedly got into my steam-engine attire and drove to the roundhouse to check in. Upon my arrival, I discovered we were to help No. 18, the *Portland Rose* passenger train, and all the way to Shoshone. Now I

Union Pacific's Challenger 3823, on which author Les Clark fired, was a 1937 Alco sister to the 3821, shown in full stride in a Robert Hale photo.



was nervous, for No. 18 was a premier train, just under the *City of Portland* Streamliner in stature. It seemed strange that the rules for a fireman required one year's worth of experience to fire on a passenger train, yet a greenhorn like me, with barely a few weeks experience, could be called to fire a passenger helper even though it would be lead engine.

After registering in for Elmer and myself, I moseyed to the outgoing tracks to locate the big Challenger to which I was assigned for the day, No. 3823. It was one of an earlier group of 4-6-6-4's UP purchased from Alco in 1937. I began the fireman's ritual of preparing the engine. This involved checking all the supplies, which included the flagging kit, oil, water, sand, and the condition of the fire and firebox. I also made sure I had enough indicator numerals to display "18" in the indicator boards, as we would be the lead engine. At that time, UP required the train's number to be displayed in the number boards, rather than the engine's number.

More questions occurred to me. Why does 18 need a helper today? Its three E units usually don't require an assist up the 1.87 percent grade east of Glenns Ferry. Why are we going the whole 50 miles to Shoshone, when the heavy grade ends just 16 miles out of town? Whatever the answers, the promise of a trip to Shoshone and back sounded great. After 30 days of student trips, I was broke and needed all the work I could get.

Soon, Elmer showed up. When he came aboard, he explained that No. 18 had electrical troubles and that an electrician who had boarded her 80 miles back at Nampa had been unable to remedy the problem. Still, 18 was reported into Glenns Ferry only 30 minutes late. As Elmer was oiling around the engine, I hosed off the deck of the cab. Though it was still almost an hour before 18's expected arrival, the herder showed up and escorted us to the ready track that led to the main line at the depot. My anticipation made the time crawl.

WHEN 18 FINALLY ARRIVED, we were quickly switched onto the main line to back up and couple to the front of the lead E unit. The hose connections were made, and shortly the car inspectors completed their air test. Off came the blue flag protecting the train, and away we went.

For the first 7 miles, the rails were level as they followed the Snake River, but our speed was soon dictated by curve speed restrictions. Things were happening much faster than I was used to, but thanks to a forgiving engine, I was able to keep up with the water level and steam pressure so that by the time we reached the 1.8 percent grade, I was ready. Elmer knew how to get the most out of that big articulated without beating it to death—a trait some engineers never did grasp. As

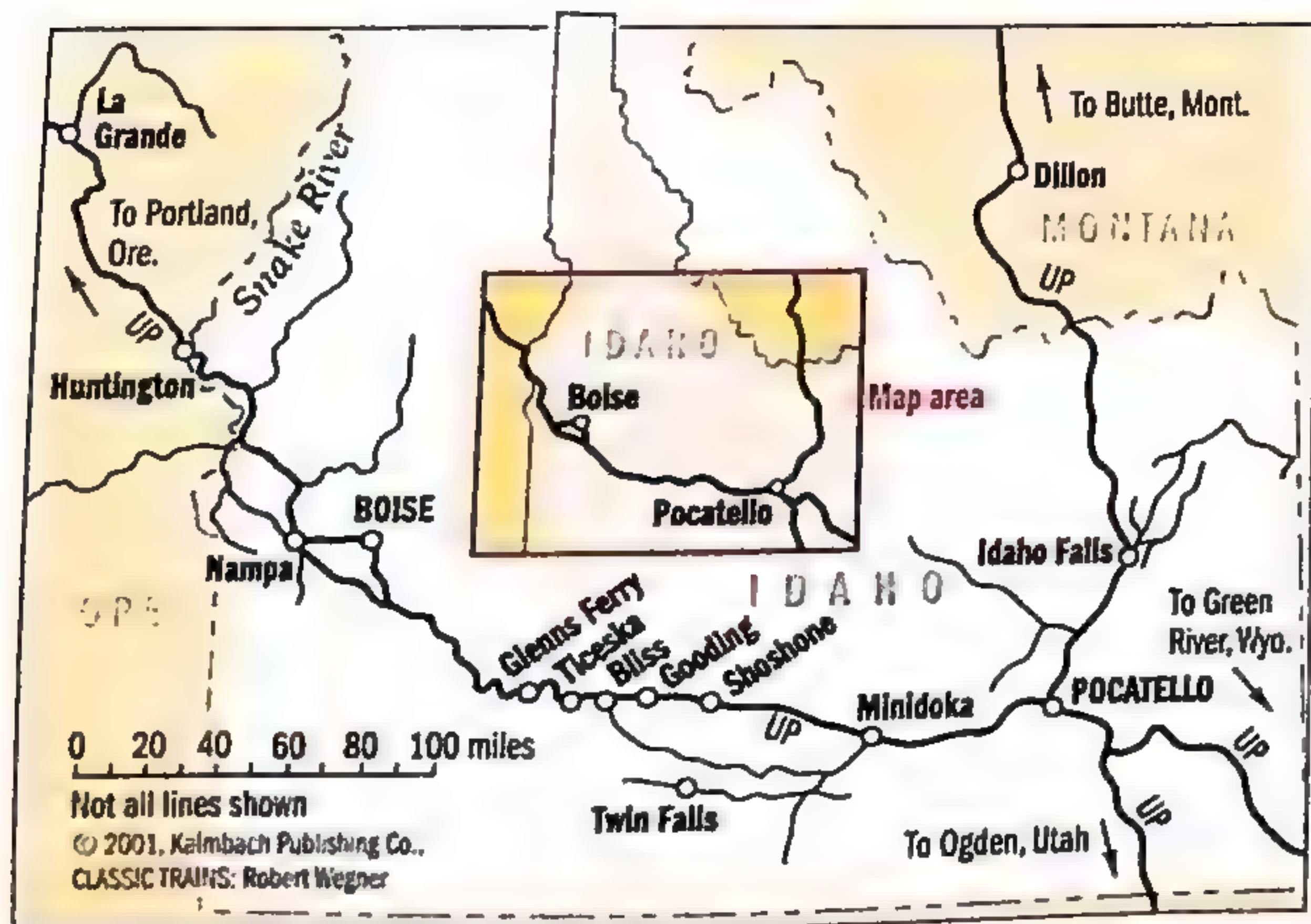


we stormed up the hill, the Challenger was a real oil-burning tornado. The sound was beautiful. It made those E units behind us seem like small stuff.

Soon we reached the top of the ruling grade and began to really pick up speed. The Challengers were limited to 60 mph in passenger service, and the standard passenger road speed was 79. Despite this restriction, the fact that we came up the hill so fast allowed us to gain some lost time, and we roared through the town of Bliss and on to Gooding, our first station stop. Elmer made a beautiful stop, spotting the tender right under the water plug. I hurried to the top of the tank to take on water. Looking back at our train, I noticed the regular engineer waving me to cut off the water and get down, but I also noticed the baggage-handling people at the depot were not finished working the train, so I ignored him and filled her to the top. When I told Elmer what had happened he just said, "Boy, when you are firing for me, I'll tell you when to get down."

I had barely gotten back to my seat when two tweets of the air signal indicated "highball." Away we went to cover the remaining 16 miles to Shoshone. As we were coming to a stop there, the telegraph operator came out to inform us that we were now to continue to assist No. 18 another 49 miles to Minidoka. Since this was all CTC-signal territory, our orders remained simple—just go! And go we did. I was glad I'd filled 3823's tender at Gooding!

Those early Challengers had no speedometer, but I'm sure we were running at our 60-mph limit, if not a shade faster. I do know things were happening mighty quickly, but I felt real proud that I was keeping up with everything: calling the block signal indications and keeping the steam, water, and smoke under control. I certainly didn't want to dirty those shiny E units behind us! About 6 miles out of Minidoka, Elmer suddenly started slowing the 3823. It caught me by surprise, so I





JIM H. GRIFFITHS

smoked things up a bit before I could cut back on the oil firing valve. He looked over at me through the haze and said he thought we had something running hot. He then made a second reduction of the brake-pipe air pressure, which brought us to a stop. He whistled out a flag to protect the rear end, and we got down to inspect things.

Sure enough, we had a hot driving-wheel bearing on the second driver of 3823's rear engine. It was not too bad, thanks to Elmer's vigilance—he'd caught the smoke and smell early. By now the conductor and a brakeman had walked to our engine, along with the regular engine crew from the diesels. They informed us they had also discovered a hot journal on one of the head-end cars. As this was single track with no place to cut us off, a decision was made to limp slowly on into Minidoka, where the crippled car could be switched out.

After we arrived, I was too busy taking us around the wye after we'd been uncoupled to notice if the head-end car was set out. At the west leg of the wye, we stopped so I could phone the dispatcher for permission to move onto the main. The dispatcher gave us permission to run slowly back to Shoshone, where a roundhouse foreman would look after our engine. How we got home from there would be up to him.

BY THE TIME we finally limped into Shoshone, it was past dinner time, and I was starved. The local roundhouse foreman (who ran a one-man operation caring for a couple of local engines) met us as I lined the switch into his domain. We positioned the engine over the inspection pit. After surveying our problem, he decided he could block the suspension so as to transfer some of the weight from the defective journal and would re-pack the bearing to allow us to return home. He said it would take him a couple of hours. With that news, Elmer said, "Let's go get something to eat."

Normally, three E units were enough for UP's eastbound *Portland Rose*, as evidenced at King Hill summit at Ticeska, Idaho, on November 11, 1963.

This sounded like a good idea to me, except that I had only 35 cents in my pocket. I had overlooked another important railroad survival rule: always prepare for the worst. It was a short walk to a local beanery, where we sat down with a menu. I was scanning it over and over, trying to see what I could get for 35 cents. Elmer apparently sensed the problem and asked, "Are you a little short?" I sheepishly admitted that I was. He reached into his pocket and drew out a silver dollar (common currency in Idaho at the time) and handed it to me.

This was more than enough to get a good meal back then, so I took the money and ordered. I don't remember our dinner conversation, but I'm sure I thanked him amply for the loan. Later, we returned to our engine and found it ready to ease on home. After obtaining permission from the dispatcher, we started on our way. The trip was slow and uneventful. After tying up at the Glenns Ferry roundhouse, I thanked Elmer again and we went our separate ways.

A couple of weeks went by before I again saw Elmer and could pay him back. We were in the enginemen's shanty in Huntington, Ore., the usual turnaround point for crews working westward out of Glenns Ferry. When I attempted to hand him a dollar, he refused it. He said, "Someday you will find someone else in need, and I would hope that you would do the same for them."

It was several years later, when I was working an afternoon hostling job at Salt Lake City, Utah, before I found that person in need. I don't remember the person's story, but I do know that it gave me great pleasure to pass along the favor Elmer had extended to me several years before. I only hope the tradition has continued. ■

Photo Classics

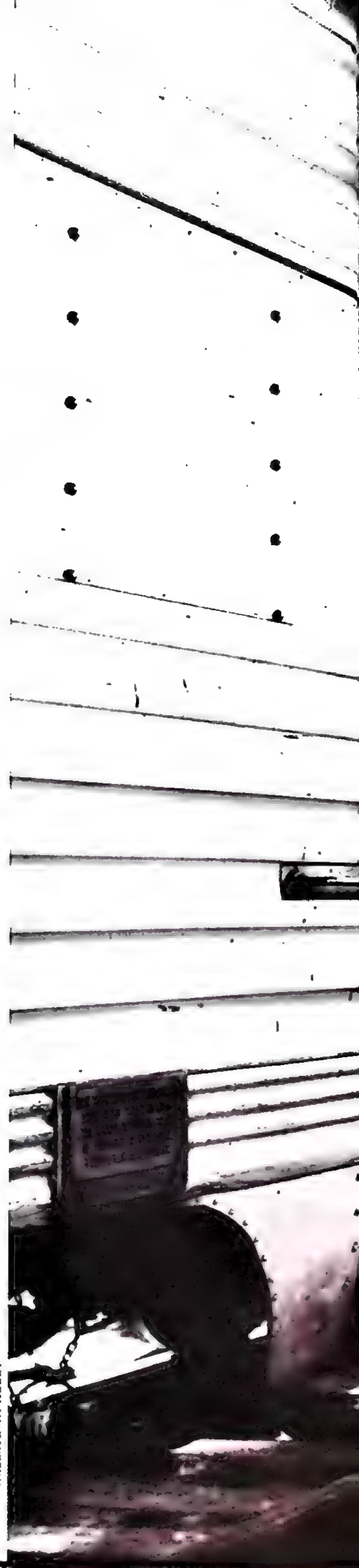


WADE J. STEVENSON

The lead F3 diesel of Great Northern's *Fast Mail* gets a going-over during the train's stop at Spokane, Wash., on the evening of July 11, 1948. The clock on the station's tower tells us train 27 is on time, for she's due in at 6:20, out at 7:00. The coach-only train is just over three-quarters of the way through its 1783-mile run from St. Paul to Seattle.

His trusty hammer in hand, a Cincinnati Union Terminal carman assumes a heroic stance as he watches a New York Central Mohawk couple up to the consist of the *James Whitcomb Riley*. Soon the elephant-eared 4-8-2 will be whipping the *Riley* across Indiana on the streamliner's 302.5-mile, 5½-hour dash to Chicago's Central Station. The date is August 31, 1953, and steam will handle the *Riley* for another 2½ years.

WALLACE W. ABBEY









TWO PHOTOS: JAMES L. SANDS

Santa Fe in the Land of Enchantment: Two EMD F7 sets (left) roar through the junction at Dalies, N.Mex., with an eastbound perishables train in February 1959. Like most freights, this train is taking the relatively flat Belen Cutoff via Amarillo, Texas. Above the trailing unit can be seen a signal and pole line of the scenic passenger route to Albuquerque, Gorieta and Raton passes, La Junta, Colo., and central Kansas.

At Albuquerque, 27.4 miles east of Dalies on the northerly route, the four Alco PA's on the Los Angeles-Chicago *Grand Canyon* are fueled during the train's 10-minute station stop. It's August 1958, and the heavyweight coaches behind the baggage car are likely handling tour groups or other extra summer-season traffic.

Photo Classics



Photo Classics

Heart of the 693-mile Central Railroad of New Jersey was Elizabethport Shops, located on 160 acres at the junction of four CNJ lines in Elizabeth, N.J. A May 1950 view of "E-port" shows the facilities it took to keep the "Big Little Railroad" going:

1. Elizabethport passenger station;
2. Main line west to Bound Brook and Pennsylvania;
3. Newark & Elizabeth Branch;
4. Main line across Newark Bay to Jersey City;
5. Perth Amboy Branch (used by southern New Jersey trains);
6. Roundhouse;
7. Locomotive backshop;
8. Blacksmith shop;
9. No. 1 stores and offices;
10. Power house;
11. Passenger-car paint and air-brake shop;
12. Passenger-car repair shop;
13. Locomotive coaling dock;
14. Dry kiln and lumber sheds;
15. Planing mill;
16. No. 2 stores;
17. Freight-car and traction-motor repair shop;
18. Track material storage;
19. Singer Sewing Machine plant.



Celebrating a century

Filled with postwar optimism, the Erie and several other roads made major events of their 100th anniversaries

By H. Roger Grant • Illustrations from the author's collection

URING AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER World War II, most American railroads prospered. Such a condition differed dramatically from their experiences just a few years earlier during the Great Depression, when scores of companies entered or came close to bankruptcy. Although at war's end railroad officials did not expect economic

utopia in the forthcoming era of peace, most remained optimistic.

This widespread confidence manifested itself in various ways. Leading passenger carriers, for example, ordered hundreds of streamlined cars, believing they could create new business and regain traffic lost to the highways. The case of the Burlington Route is illustrative. In 1945 the company introduced America's first Vista-Dome car, which proved so popular that 40 more were quickly ordered. By late 1947 the Burlington had taken delivery of enough of these distinctive cars to allow it to inaugurate two entirely new *Twin Zephyrs*. Then, in 1949, the luxurious Vista-Dome *California Zephyr* entered service.

Railroad leaders also embraced an exciting replacement technology, diesel-electric locomotives, and steam rapidly disappeared. Less glitzy were the millions of dollars spent on terminals, yards, track, and other improvements. "With the series of costly betterments to American railroads," observed Delaware, Lackawanna & Western President William White in 1947, "I frankly don't see why everyone will not benefit, especially the trav-

eling and shipping public. There are challenges to be sure, but the railroads are in much better shape now than at any time since before the government's takeover [in 1917]." Few, if any, in the industry would have challenged White's conclusions.

With extra money at hand, many railroad executives decided to spend some of it on bolstering corporate images. Even though the industry had responded heroically to wartime demands, its overall reputation remained somewhat tarnished. School students read in their textbooks about the exploits of Gilded Age "railroad rascals." Conclusions reached by Matthew Josephson in his widely heralded book, *The Robber Barons*, likewise had a profound impact on popular perceptions of railroad leaders. He concluded that the Drews, Fisks, and Goulds of American railroading had been destroyers, not builders. The industry also needed to wrestle with its earlier financial setbacks. Throughout much of the 1930's, stockholders commonly had lost part or all of their investments in the rails. Some securities once deemed safe for widows and orphans came to be viewed as downright risky.

After the war, the industry aimed to convince citizens that railroads were well managed and a wise place to invest. Although some carriers relied on newspaper and radio advertisements, brochures, and similar outlets, or depended upon the Association of Amer-

Old and new trains graced the covers of centennial booklets of the Burlington and the North Western. In the postwar era, CB&Q fielded dome cars, while C&NW led the Chicago Railroad Fair.



ican Railroads for a better image, others seized on historical events, most likely an anniversary, as a vehicle. These usually were roads that traced their origins to the late 1840's and early 1850's, when the railroad network began its first major wave of expansion. Perhaps, too, there had been a major achievement during that historic period or something else in the past that was deemed worthy of celebration.

THE IDEA of a railroad-sponsored centennial celebration was hardly new. Industry veterans remembered the gala the Baltimore & Ohio had sponsored to commemorate its claim as "the pioneer railroad of the country," a year-long birthday party in 1927. Highlighted by an elaborate banquet on February 28 in a fancy Baltimore hotel, it featured a three-week Centenary Exhibition and Pageant, commonly called "The Fair of the Iron Horse," which attracted more than 1.3 million visitors.

Some railroads in the postwar era that lacked a specific event to celebrate joined with others that did to mark the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the iron horse to Chicago with the Chicago Railroad Fair of 1948-49, spearheaded by the Chicago & North Western's publicity department. The North Western wanted to bring attention to itself and the industry because the first locomotive to operate in the Windy City belonged to its predecessor, the Galena & Chicago Union Rail Road. On a mile-long strip of land along Lake Michigan, 35 railroads joined with the North Western to sponsor this well-orchestrated event, chronicled most recently in August 1998 *TRAINS* as "The Last Great Railroad Show."

The fair exceeded all expectations. Between July 20 and October 2, 1948, more than 2.5 million visitors paid several million dollars to learn about the way railroads revolutionized Chicago and the nation. The colorful past and the bright future were part of the popular daily pageant, "Wheels a-Rolling," in which the venerable 4-2-0 locomotive *Pioneer* of the G&CU, under steam, became a

A brochure marking the Erie's 100th birthday featured likenesses of a 4-4-0 from the early 1850's and an Alco FA diesel. Inside, text, photos, and artwork promoted the road's passenger trains.



Guests and costumed models crowd the deck of the boat from Manhattan as it nears the dock at Piermont, N.Y., just north of the New Jersey state line. Later in the day, the re-enactment train paused at Susquehanna, Pa. One flatcar sported a rocking chair for "Daniel Webster"; another carried B&O's William Mason, portraying an early Erie engine.



Actor Dallas Boyd, in his role as the rocking-chair-sitting Daniel Webster, is surrounded by dignitaries, including Erie President Paul Johnston (far right). On the second day of the commemorative train's journey, a large portion of the citizenry of Wellsville, N.Y., was at the depot for a look. Schools and businesses along the route were closed for the event.

star performer. The enthusiastic public response led to a repeat performance when, during the summer and early fall of 1949, more than 2.7 million people visited the fair.

The resounding success of the Chicago Railroad Fair and the North Western's own elaborate celebrations during 1948, which included such varied activities as 58 community parades featuring a rubber-tired replica of the *Pioneer*, a 25-minute color motion picture, and a concrete time capsule placed on the site of Chicago's first railroad station, prompted its president to crow. As R. L. "Bud" Williams explained on November 8, 1948, to a meeting of the Western

Railway Club in Chicago, "such an event [a centennial] offers a rare opportunity to widen influence, to create good will, and even to increase business." Then the North Western head admonished colleagues that "Companies having a centennial to celebrate are obligated to themselves and to their stockholders to do something about it."

TYPICAL of special celebrations conducted by carriers were those sponsored by the Erie Railroad in 1951. This 2432-mile New York-to-Chicago trunk road had reason to be in a festive mood. In the 1930's the Erie had entered its fourth bankruptcy, attesting

to what some wags thought to be its rightful moniker, "The Weary Erie." But in 1941 the company emerged from court protection, paid dividends on its common stock for the first time in memory, and later embarked on a series of improvements, including dieselization. As with other carriers battered by the Depression, such as the Milwaukee Road, Minneapolis & St. Louis, or Monon, by the mid-1940's officials at Erie headquarters in Cleveland felt good, particularly about their economic revival.

"We were pleased as punch with the way things were going after the war," recalled George C. Frank, who served

as assistant to President Paul W. Johnston. "We hit on the idea of making the centennial of the opening of the original main line between Piermont and Dunkirk [N.Y.] a really special event."

In late 1950 Frank had explained to top company officials that "the predominant theme will be 'Progress and Service' and will give us an opportunity to deal with the following public-relations objectives directed toward special audiences, such as: shippers, passengers, employees, stockholders, civic leaders, legislators, schools, and financial communities." He listed 10 specific objectives:

1. Increase knowledge about the Erie
2. Demonstrate Erie's progressiveness
3. Build faith and confidence in Erie's management
4. Strengthen employee morale and pride in the company
5. Add increased recognition of Erie's service to communities
6. Stimulate business, both passenger and freight
7. Establish Erie's improved credit position in financial circles
8. Associate Erie's history with free-enterprise principles
9. Show importance of strong, healthy railroads in peacetime and for national defense
10. Promote desirability of Erie's territory for plant location

Although completion in 1851 of the 446-mile rail link between the "ocean and the lakes" (Atlantic Ocean via the Hudson River and Lake Erie) hardly rivaled the Golden Spike at Promontory Summit 18 years later, it was still significant. The Erie rightly claimed the opening to be "A Milestone in American History." What officials had foremost in their minds was to commemorate the historic "inaugural" trip of May 14 and 15, 1851, which featured a special train carrying a host of dignitaries, including President Millard Fillmore and his cabinet. This re-enactment would surely attract media attention.

The Erie benefited from a well-designed and executed plan. For a fee of \$25,000, the Steve Hannigan Agency, a New York City advertising firm, effectively managed myriad details with the railroad, on-line communities, participants, and hundreds of guests. The celebratory train contained a host of area politicians, business leaders, and railroad officials. And it featured a fascinating side note. In 1851 the Erie had accommodated a wish of the beloved American statesman Daniel Webster.

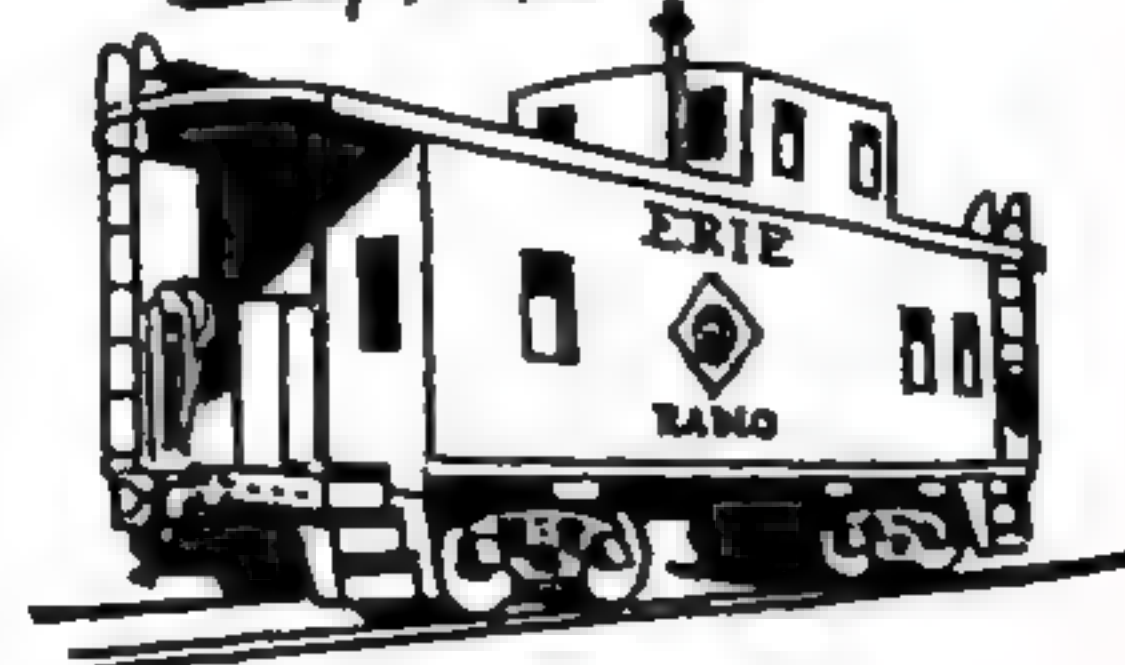
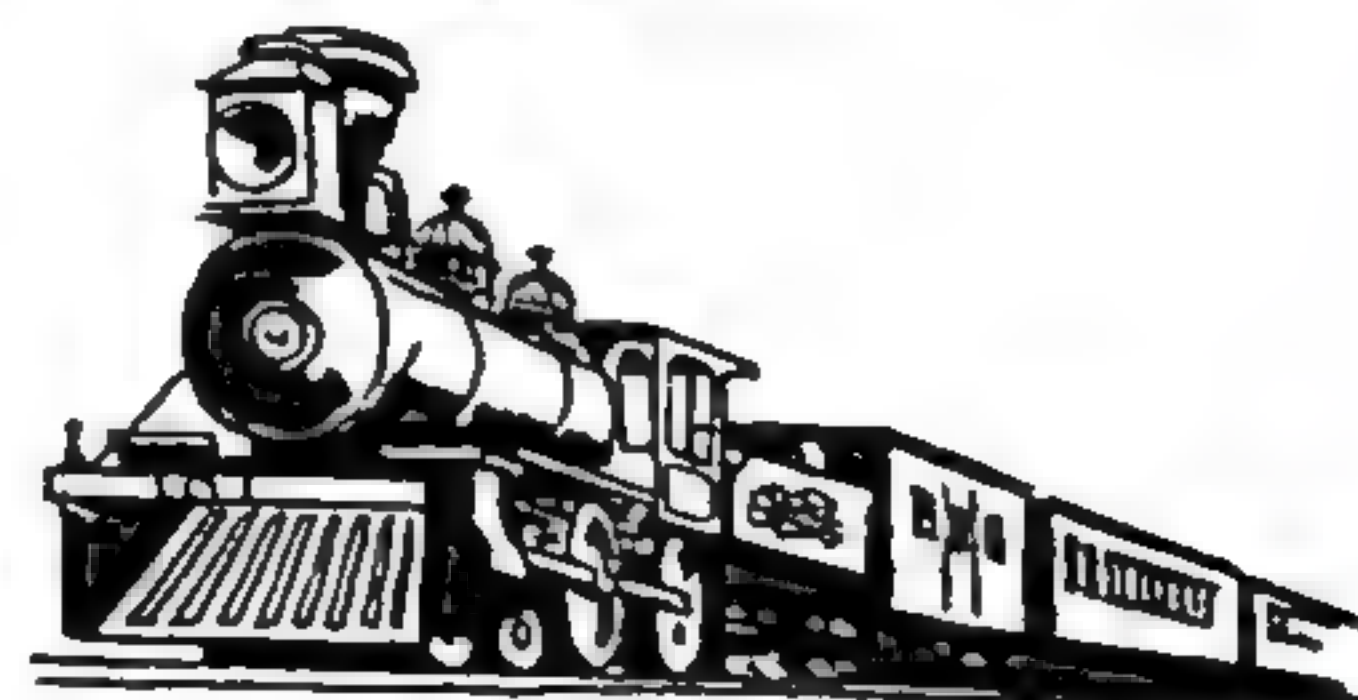
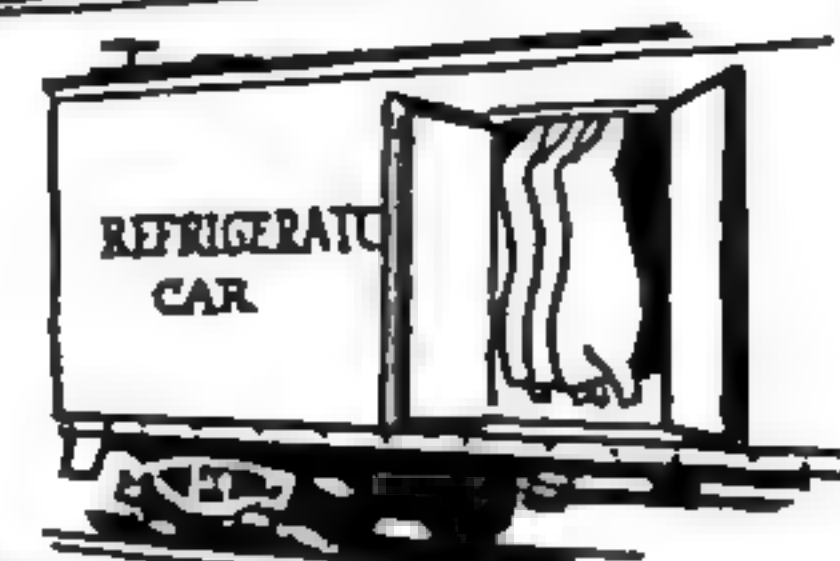
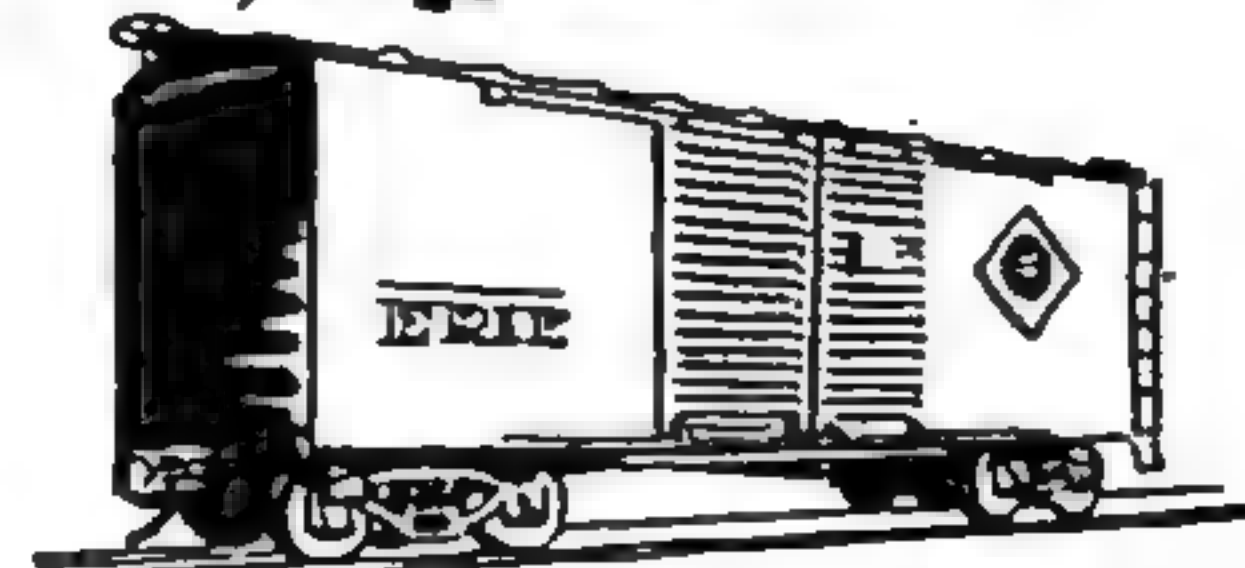
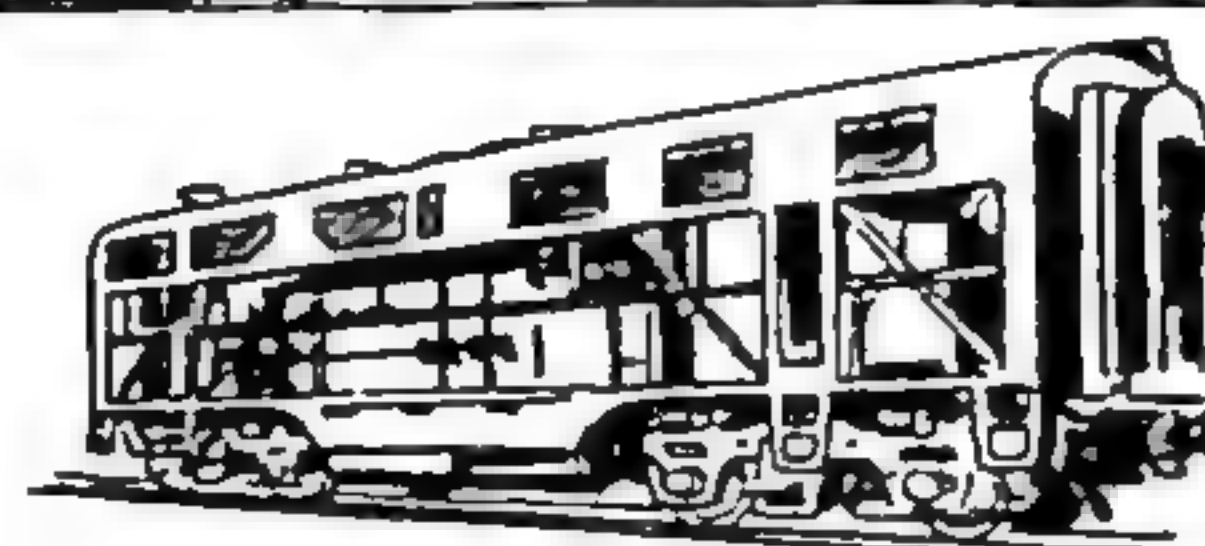
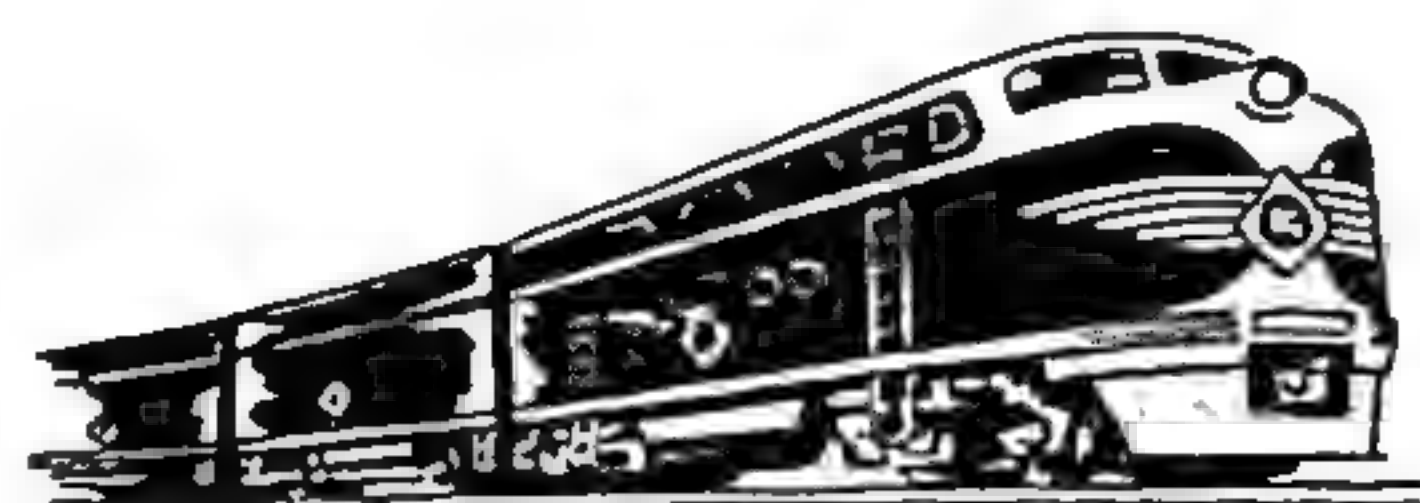
Fillmore's Secretary of State had asked for a better view of the spectacular scenery through the hills and valleys of the Southern Tier of New York, namely he wanted to sit in a rocking chair on an open flatcar. An actor portraying Webster became the signature feature of the re-enacted journey.

ALL WENT AS EXPECTED. Early on Monday, May 14, 1951, several hundred invited guests gathered at Manhattan's Pier 20 on the Hudson River after being met by "four beautiful young damsels all clad in the most voluminous hoop-skirts of gay colors, with hats or bonnets to match those in vogue in the year 1851." At 8:30 a.m. the excursion boat *John A. Mesek* (renamed for the day the *Erie*) left for Piermont. Blessed with sparkling spring weather, most guests gathered on the upper decks where they enjoyed breakfast and a "very versatile musical trio." Before the boat reached Piermont the paid models distributed striped engineer's caps and colored neck bandannas and other centennial souvenirs.

At the dock, mayors of Piermont and neighboring Spring Valley were "dressed in the style of the 1851 period . . . with tan beaver hat, long coat, and trousers of the same shade, very fancy vest and white ruffled shirt front." They greeted people and led a procession of automobiles and buses to an open area near a local factory "where a speakers' stand was erected with loud-speaker, facing a big throng of the populace which had assembled, not only from Piermont, but from all the surrounding villages as well, schoolchildren and their mothers in predominance." Speeches followed; indeed, they were ubiquitous throughout the two-day journey. Wherever President Johnston made remarks, he always asked "Daniel Webster" (portrayed by television actor Dallas Boyd) to speak as well.

Soon after 9:30 a.m., the entourage left Piermont for Elmira by special train. It consisted of 10 modern cabooses, an 1856 4-4-0 locomotive and tender mounted on a flatcar, another flatcar with a rocking chair for "Mr. Webster," a Civil War-era coach, and a baggage car of similar vintage. (The 19th-century equipment was on loan from the Baltimore & Ohio's collec-

Artwork from a brochure shows the various items—everything from a cutaway diesel locomotive to the latest in passenger accommodations to an Army tank on a flatcar—found on the "Erie Centennial Exhibition Train." During its 53-day tour of the system, the train drew nearly 250,000 visitors.





ABOVE AND OPPOSITE PAGE: CLASSIC TRAINS COLLECTION

B&O's *William Mason* also helped the Milwaukee Road mark its centennial. Beneath bunting and *Hiawatha* emblems, the 4-4-0 faces off with a diesel at the station in Milwaukee on November 20, 1950.

tion.) Two new diesel locomotives provided power. After stops at Spring Valley and Suffern, the Erie rearranged the train, cutting out all but one caboose and the "ancient baggage car" and adding 10 Pullman lounge cars and 2 dining cars.

During the trip on Monday, the centennial special made 15- to 20-minute stops at Middletown, Port Jervis, and Deposit, N.Y.; Susquehanna, Pa.; and Binghamton, N.Y. At most places, enormous crowds greeted the special. Schools and many businesses were closed so people could see the spectacle.

The Steve Hannigan Agency continued to fete on-board guests. Between station stops, guests lolled in their comfortable chairs, smoked complimentary cigars and cigarettes, and partook of liquid refreshments. When the train reached Elmira at 6:20 p.m. (only 20 minutes late), riders detrained for an

evening in the Mark Twain Hotel, including an elaborate reception and dinner. Others joined, too. "Everybody in Elmira who is anybody was there."

The second day featured an early breakfast for guests and a 9 a.m. departure from the Elmira depot. Before the train reached its final destination, Dunkirk, it stopped at the New York towns of Hornell, Wellsville, Olean, and Salamanca, with large crowds and repeated speeches. In Salamanca a Seneca chief initiated President Johnston into the tribe and presented him with "an Indian war bonnet complete with feathers."

The climax of the two-day journey began in Dunkirk shortly after 6 p.m. Train guests joined local residents and those from surrounding areas, estimated at more than 20,000, for a "real blowout," which featured speeches, music, food, and a parade. Finally, about 10:00 p.m., festivities ended and most guests returned to their assigned Pullman cars for an overnight return trip to New York City.

The Erie did more than operate the

Piermont-Dunkirk re-enactment train. It dispatched another one, the "Erie Centennial Exhibition Train," which consisted of an assortment of rolling stock and exhibits, ranging from an Army tank placed on a flatcar (to show the military importance of the Erie, which could accommodate wide loads) to a "Museum Car" with an array of artifacts and photographs. For 53 days, beginning June 18, the train toured the system, attracting nearly a quarter of a million visitors.

Early in 1952 Erie officers assessed the centennial activities. Internal memoranda revealed widespread approval for what had transpired. Although expenses had exceeded by \$80,080.67 the original budget of \$200,000, no one fussed.

THE ERIE'S EXPERIENCES frequently replicated what occurred on other carriers. The roving "special" was a common and usually popular feature. The Monon, for one, claimed that its historic train, which in July 1947 visited 20 communities, drew

more than 100,000 people on its leisurely journey from Hammond, Ind., to Louisville, Ky. Displays of historic rolling stock, whether static or not, were frequently employed. For example, the Western Maryland, which held its centennial in 1952, staged a reenactment of Abraham Lincoln's presentation of the Gettysburg Address, borrowing the B&O's vintage locomotive *Thatcher Perkins* and three period B&O coaches. Commemorative logos were widely used on stationery, stations, pins, flags, and banners and the occasional medallion. Special luncheons and banquets were common.

Yet, variations occurred. Some roads, for example, focused on a published company history, wanting a permanent record of past accomplishments. The Pennsylvania Railroad opted for a comprehensive, albeit somewhat dry tome, *Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1846-1946*, by George J. Burgess and Miles C. Kennedy. The Minneapolis & St. Louis, though 20 years short of its centennial, sponsored a more popular history commemorating its corporate renaissance, *Mileposts on the Prairie*, by Frank P. Donovan Jr.

Just as the M&StL lacked a bonafide centennial to commemorate, the Western Pacific, too, faced a similar problem. Yet the road wanted to grab some of the limelight. Since the WP opened relatively late, completing its Salt Lake City-Oakland stem in 1909, resourceful employees in its San Francisco headquarters decided that the past could still be celebrated. The idea grew out of a historical footnote, namely that when construction crews met at Spanish Creek in the Feather River Canyon near Keddie, Calif., there was no ceremony—no decorated locomotives, no magnums of champagne, no commemorative spike. Accordingly, on

November 1, 1949, WP brought Leonard Tomasso, who had served as general foreman of construction 40 years earlier, to the Spanish Creek site. With a gleaming silver spike maul that had been formally presented to him at the Chicago Railroad Fair, Tomasso hammered a ruby spike before a large, appreciative crowd, including a bevy of photographers.

It is impossible to determine which railroad had the most successful historical observances. Even modest activities such as publication in 1949 of a 20-page centennial pamphlet by the Rutland Railroad or a series of centennial newspaper and magazine advertisements two years later by the Missouri Pacific surely impressed targeted audiences. Even though officials of the North Western, Erie, Monon, and other roads likely concluded that they had accomplished their goals in their special events, the Illinois Central may have achieved the most.

The IC carefully planned and executed its centennial. The company decided to mount a comprehensive program to commemorate its official founding on February 10, 1951, and to show that it was indeed the "Main Line of Mid-America." Preparation began in 1949 when IC President Wayne Johnston appointed a special committee, consisting of representatives from all the road's departments, to make detailed arrangements.

The IC strove for grass-roots involvement, working closely with a wide range of community groups. Anticipating a heavy demand for speakers, the personnel department trained approximately 250 employee volunteers to provide presentations to local service organizations, governmental units, and other groups. Once the centennial

year arrived, IC hosted dinners; unveiled displays in banks, businesses, libraries, and railroad offices; sponsored a centennial history volume by Carlton J. Corliss; and distributed a plethora of items that fea-

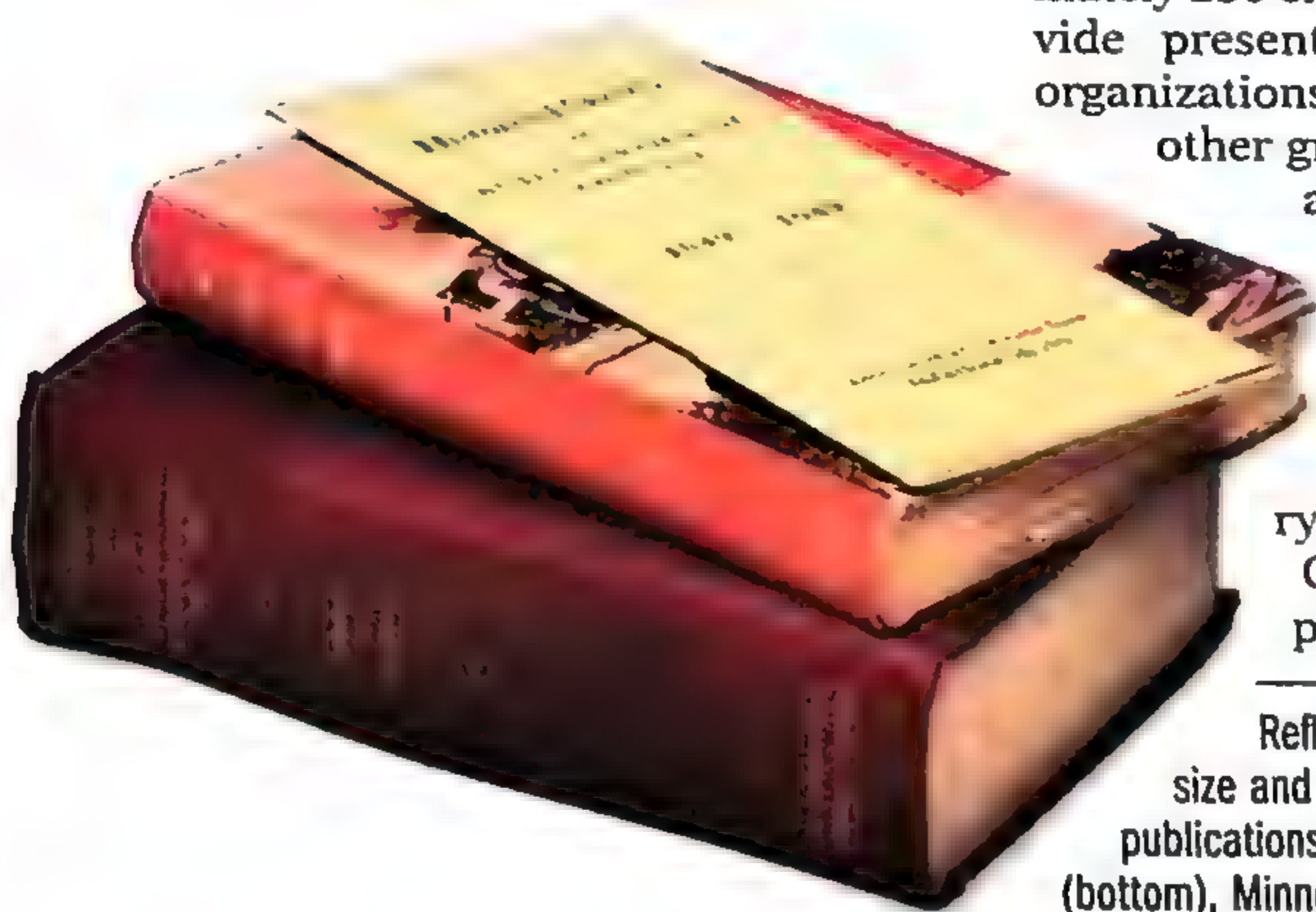
Reflecting their respective carriers' size and personality are the centennial publications of the Pennsylvania Railroad (bottom), Minneapolis & St. Louis, and Rutland.



The February 1951 edition of IC's employee magazine featured likenesses of the front and back of the centennial medallion. Variations set in stone were placed at depots all across the IC system.

tured its centennial medallion, including coffee cups, coasters, match books, cigar bands, and menus. "If there is anyone in mid-America who does not know that the Illinois Central is celebrating 100 years of service to mid-America," observed a newspaper columnist, "he would have to be deaf, dumb, and blind." *Railway Age* subsequently concluded that the centennial "paid enormous dividends."

Corporate centennials still occur, but they are no longer associated with the railroad industry. Mergers have radically reduced the number of large carriers so that there are only a handful left to recognize historical benchmarks. Perhaps at some point in the 21st century, bicentennial galas will take place on CSX, Norfolk Southern, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, or Union Pacific, or their merged mega-successors, probably tracing to a key historical component company. Maybe regional railroads or short lines will find an event to celebrate. However, it is highly unlikely that the richness of those numerous and varied railroad festivities which occurred in the decade following World War II will ever be surpassed. ■

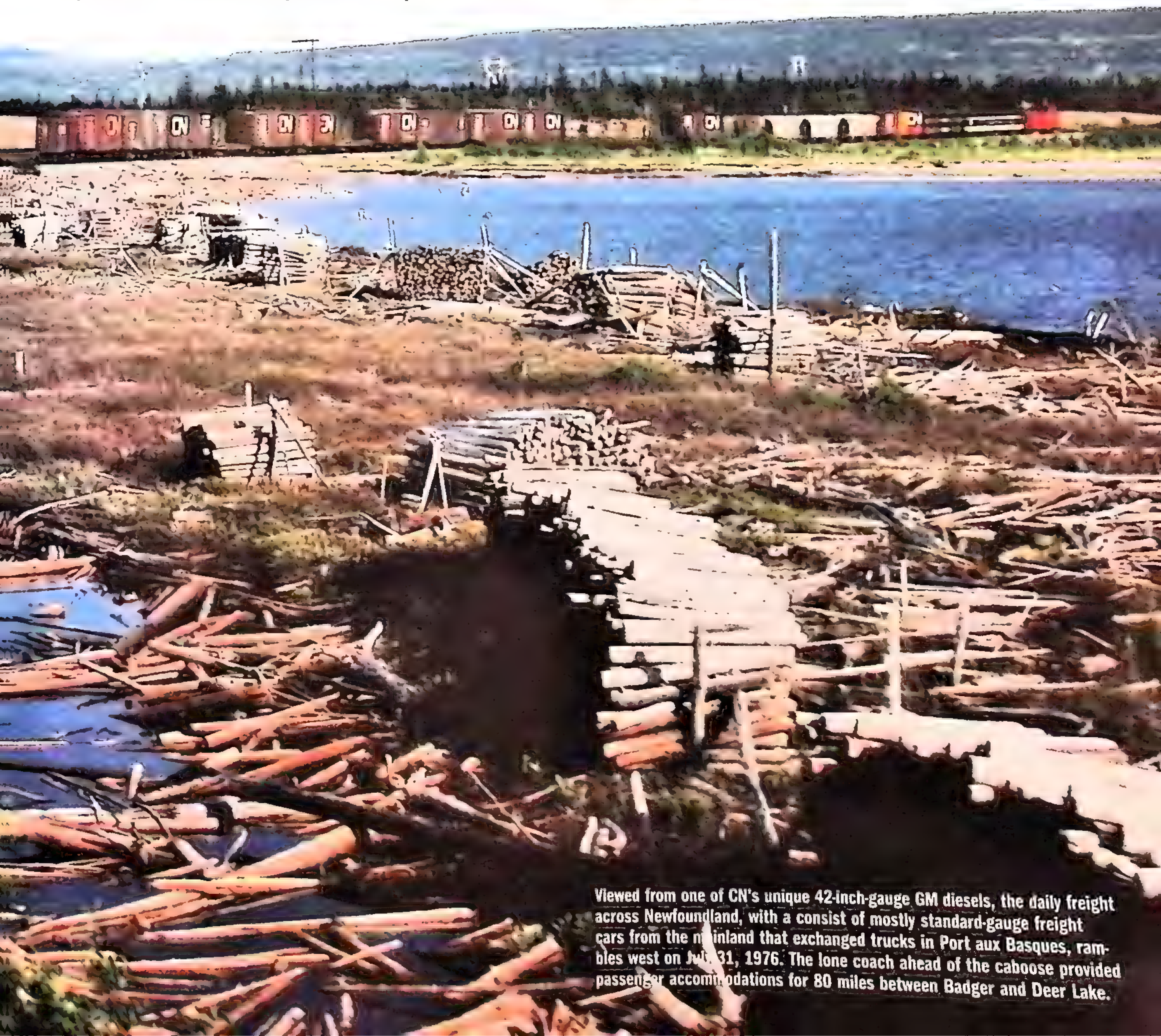




Canadian National's Narrow-gauge kingdom

Mixed trains and slow freights
across Newfoundland —
a glimpse of a vanishing world

By James B. Armstrong • Photos by the author



Viewed from one of CN's unique 42-inch-gauge GM diesels, the daily freight across Newfoundland, with a consist of mostly standard-gauge freight cars from the mainland that exchanged trucks in Port aux Basques, rambles west on July 31, 1976. The lone coach ahead of the caboose provided passenger accommodations for 80 miles between Badger and Deer Lake.

ON MAY 11, 1969, the *New York Times* published an article about a train. In spite of the significance of the date—the previous day had marked the centennial of the Golden Spike—the topic was neither transcontinental railroads nor festive occasions. The dateline was St. John's, Newfoundland, and the news was grim.

"Newfoundland's Bullet Is Going Off the Track" was the ominous headline. In many respects, the article was similar to countless others from the 1950's and 1960's—a passenger train that had lost money for years was about to be discontinued. Thanks to a recently finished federal highway across the island, buses were providing faster, more frequent service. The train's fate was sealed, and it had only a few weeks to run.

What made the story newsworthy was that the "Newfie Bullet," as the Canadian National train was popularly known, was unique—it was North America's only long-distance narrow-gauge passenger train, carrying sleeping cars as well as coaches. Riding on rails set 3 feet, 6 inches apart, the "Bullet" (its given name, *Caribou*, was rarely invoked) traveled 547 miles from one side of the remote and rugged island to the other. A few weeks after the *Times* article appeared, my father and I rode the Bullet, CN train 102, on one of its last east-bound runs from Port aux Basques to the capital city of St. John's.

It was my father who'd seen the *Times*' account. He had sent the clipping to me in Massachusetts, where I was completing my freshman year of college,

with a succinct note: "I think we'd better ride this train while we still can." I had readily agreed, and as soon as my exams were over, we headed north. We flew to Nova Scotia and rode the overnight ferry from North Sydney to Port aux Basques. For a modest \$45, our two first-class tickets aboard the Bullet provided us with a leisurely 22-hour journey across Canada's easternmost province, three delicious meals in the dining car, and two lower berths in the sleeper.

In many respects, our trip was simply a routine journey aboard an unheralded train. But it was also special, a poignant farewell to what had clearly been a grand tradition as well as an important cultural symbol. And for an impressionable 19-year-old, the trip to St. John's was a real eye-opener, because it offered a tantalizing glimpse into an unusual world that was itself on borrowed time, the world of narrow-gauge railroading on a truly grand scale.

SEVEN YEARS LATER, in summer 1976, I decided to return to Newfoundland for a closer look at CN's little-known narrow-gauge empire. The Bullet was long gone, and freight service was down even from the modest levels of my previous visit. But there was still a pleasing variety of trains.

Chief among them was the daily freight across the island. Although carded as a fourth-class freight, it was transformed in the middle of its run into a mixed train. This was because a long stretch of railroad was far from the Trans-Canada Highway, Route 1, whose buses had replaced the Bullet. To accommodate any local riders, the freight was required to add a coach to its consist between Badger and Deer Lake.

CN also ran mixed trains three days a week on three branches, the Argentia, Carbonear, and Bonavista lines, on the more heavily populated eastern side of the island. In all, CN still operated about 700 miles of 42-inch-gauge track, which it had inherited from the Newfoundland Railway in 1949, when the island became Canada's 10th province. There were two other 42-inch-gauge lines, both in central Newfoundland: Grand Falls Central Railway, a short line, and the Buchans Railway, a private mining road.

In 1976 I was employed by the National Railway Publication Co., working as an editorial assistant in the department that produced *The Official Railway Guide*. Since my job gave me full access to all the information that went into both the passenger and freight editions of the *Guide*, I had no trouble devising an itinerary with a maximum amount





of train-riding in a minute, then 15, 30, 45, 1 hour, 1 1/2 hours. Once I'd completed my schedule, I wrote to CN, on my computer, naturally, and with my boss's permission.

The reply I received couldn't have been better. CN generously granted me permission to ride any of its trains anywhere on the island. And after signing the necessary liability releases, I was allowed to ride where I wished—in any locomotive, caboose, or coach.

Thus armed, I headed off to Newfoundland for a memorable one-week vacation. Once again, I started in Port aux Basques and worked east. After reaching St. John's, I rode all the branch line mixeds, and then traveled back across the island as far as Deer Lake.

Although in later years I returned to Maritime Canada, and with my father rode the Quebec North Shore & Labrador, I did not get back to Newfoundland. The island's mixed trains stopped running in 1984, also the year the colorful, anachronistic Bonaville branch was abandoned. On the main line, all service—by then conducted by a CN entity called Terra Transport—came to an end on September 30, 1988. The tracks were pulled up beginning that October.



On July 25, 1976, daily freight 204 to St. John's pulled briefly 20 miles out of Port aux Basques, hauled by an overheated 1012 class diesel. In the 11 car consist are autos for Grand Falls, oil for low-spoke Ingonish for both bridge and lumber and appliances for St. John's. The standard gauge cars crossed the Capot Strait from Nova Scotia on the CN line Frederick Carter

the daily train of the White Grand Falls Central meets the CN interchange at Bishop's Falls behind a 612 70-tonner. The one cars will be taken by CN to Millertown Junction for the Becharis Railway, to be loaded with copper, lead and zinc ore. The van or caboose at the rear offered what the Guide termed "limited passenger accommodations," which I verified on a ride up to Belwood



Every morning at 9:45, trains 203 and 204 were scheduled to meet at Rattling. During summer 1976, however, trackwork on the Clarendville Subdivision played havoc with the timecard, and the meet took place at any hour and at the most convenient passing siding. Above, westbound 203 crosses the Exploits River and enters the yard at Bishops Falls, three hours late, as 204 waits patiently. Five units pull 203, while 204 has three. The line's "big" diesels, nearly identical 1200 h.p. models classed GR12 by CN—NF110's 900-908 and NF210's 909-946—were built by GM in 1952-60. Looking like miniature GP7's without a short hood, they rode on C-C Flexicoil trucks. Some survive in South America on the meter-gauge Antofagasta & Bolivia Railway.

The Bonavista Sub was the most picturesque—and least profitable—of the Newfoundland branches, wandering 88 miles from Shoal Harbor (outside Clarendville) to the tip of the Bonavista peninsula. Among the line's features was Trinity Loop, where the track crossed over itself. The wye at the end of the line employed antiquated stub switches. At right, the Friday mixed is ready to leave Bonavista as train 206—any train heading toward St. John's was eastward—behind two of CN's six A1A-trucked GM G8 export-model units of 1956, the lead one in the old green-and-gold colors. Four hours later, nearing Shoal Harbor, a boxcar jumped the track. The crew was told to leave the train where it was, and the few remaining riders rode into Clarendville on the locomotives.



Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, a mixed train left St. John's at 1 p.m. and headed to Argentia. It would come back as far as Whitbourne and tie up for the night. The next morning, it left the main at Brigus Junction for a round trip over the Carbonear branch, eventually returning to St. John's by the middle of Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday afternoon. During its meanderings, it would carry five numbers: 207, 208, 211, 212, and 232—twice. Below, it is 207, not long into its journey, rounding a curve on the main line near Placentia Junction. In the consist are outside-frame narrow-gauge box-cars, a flatcar carrying a pickup truck bound for Argentia, and two standard-gauge cars from the mainland. Three 875 h.p. G8's provide the power.







The roller-coaster profile of the single-track main, the steep grades, and all those curves (reportedly, the sharpest in Canada) were the constants that kept any CN train in Newfoundland from making good time. Given the chance, though, the GR12 workhorses could put on a show. (Official top speed on the island was 40 mph.) At left, train 204 charges through Notre Dame Junction with five units leading 75 cars. The view is from the rear of train 203, which has pulled onto the wye that marked the start of the 9.4-mile Lewisporte Subdivision, which at the time had no regularly scheduled service. Once 204 is past, 203 will back onto the main line and resume its journey. The lamp by the old station platform is from the days when the "Bullet" stopped here.

Anyone who's ever relished branchline railroading—friendly crews, relaxed schedules, and plenty of stops to set out a boxcar or pick up the occasional passenger—would have loved Newfoundland's mixed trains. You could spend the trip at an open Dutch door, and if you were lucky (as I was), the crew might ask you to join them for a meal. Below, continuing its peripatetic journey encompassing two branches and five train numbers, CN's wandering mixed—pictured beginning the day at lower left—has just returned from its round trip on the Carbonear branch as train 212. It has shed the last three of its freight cars, and is ready to rejoin the main line at Brigus Junction. Those kerosene markers adorn an unusual "combine" serving as coach and caboose.



On Thursday morning, July 29, 1976 (left), the day after it serviced the rugged 21-mile Argientia branch (it was aboard a warship just off Argientia in August 1941 that Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter), CN's multi-numbered Newfoundland mixed is ready to leave its main-line overnight resting spot of Whitbourne as train 232, with 14 freight cars. It will make a round trip up the Carbonear branch before returning to St. John's.

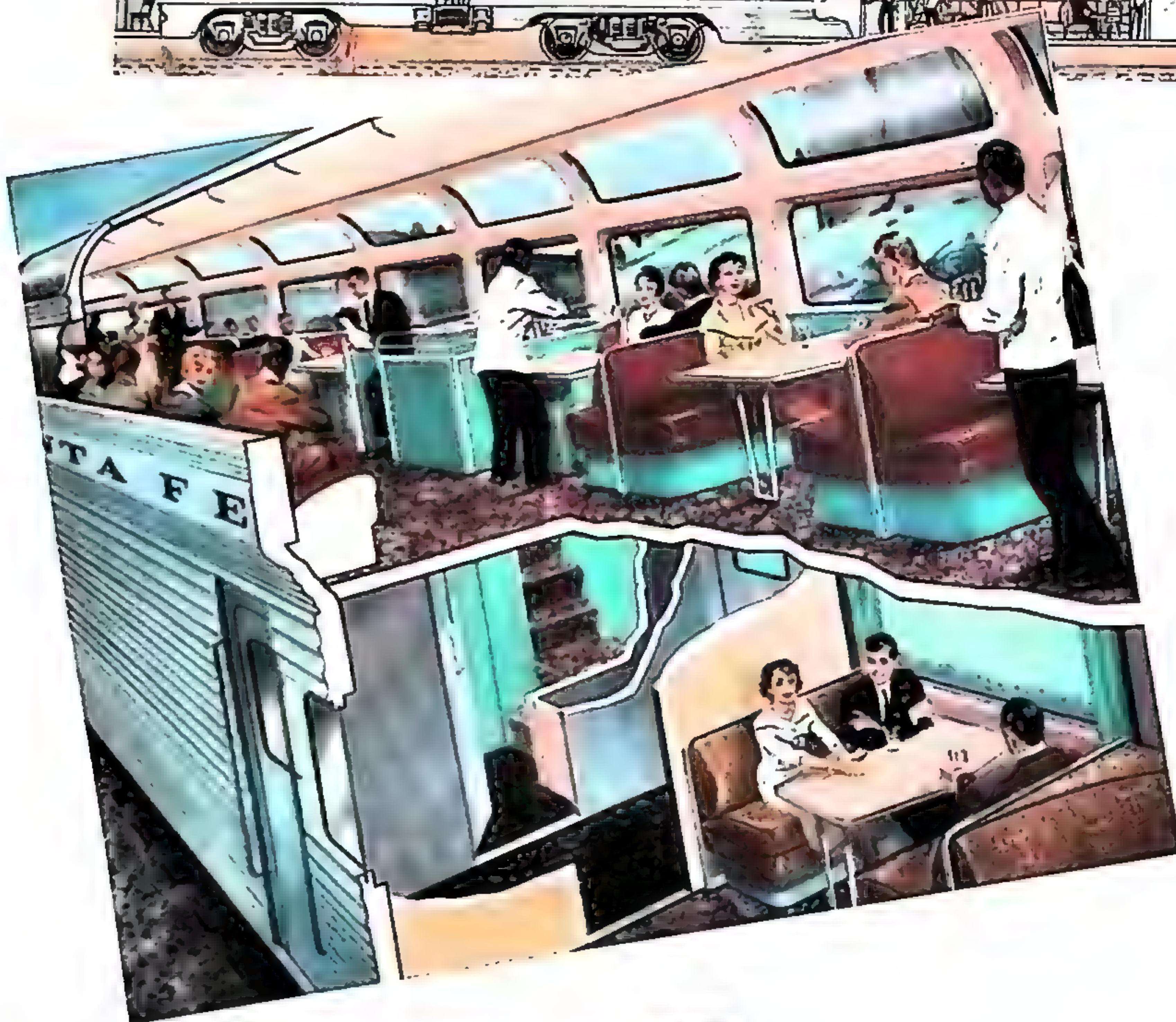
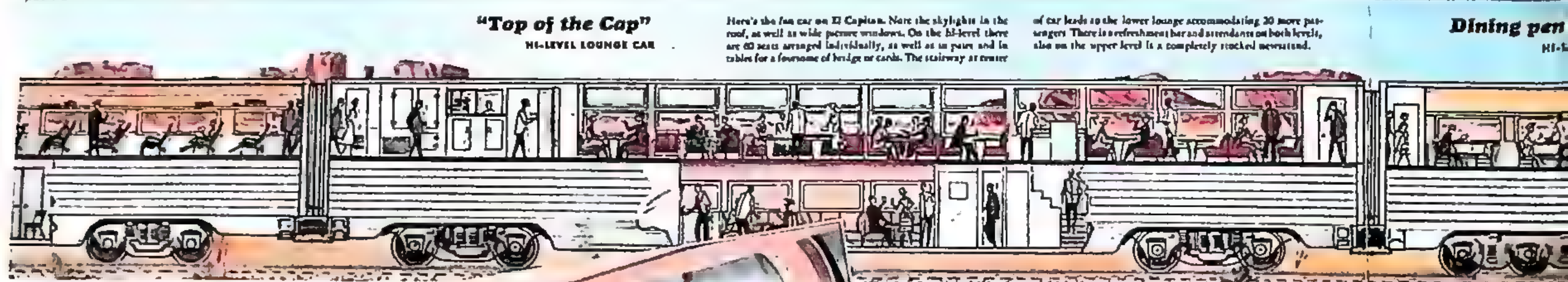




On Saturday, July 31, 1976, I took a 243-mile ride on train 203 from Clarendville to Deer Lake. It began in the early-morning hours, allowing me to see the sunrise from a caboose cupola. As the day wore on, the train made its slow, steady way past bogs, across rivers, and through forests of spruce and birch. Before crossing the Gander River at Glenwood, it descended a

long, steep grade, where the air was soon redolent with the pungent smell of brakeshoe smoke (above). The train was scheduled to leave St. John's at 10 p.m. and arrive at Port aux Basques 28½ hours later—an average speed of about 19 mph. My trip started later, was slower, and took longer, thanks to many slow orders including a 10-mile one that took a full hour. ■

1954: Riding high on the Santa Fe



"NOTHING LIKE IT IN RAILROADING": Santa Fe re-equips its all-coach Chicago-Los Angeles *El Capitan* with new hi-level cars from the Budd Co. The unique double-deckers measure 4½ feet higher than standard cars and come in coach, lounge, and diner configurations. A hit with passengers and railroaders, the hi-level design would be adopted a quarter century later for Amtrak's Superliners. Some of the *El Cap* cars are still in service today.

NO MORE NEW STEAM: For the first time since the beginning of railroading, a year passes without a single new reciprocating steam locomotive being placed in service. The drought would prove to be permanent. . . . EMD introduces the GP9, best-selling of all its GP-series units, and General Electric fields No. 750, an A-B-B-A test-bed that paved the way for GE's entry into the big road-diesel market five years later. . . . Southern Pacific orders a small GE diesel for its lonely California narrow gauge, and Rio Grande leases an Army diesel for testing on its Colorado slim-gauge lines.

INTERURBAN TREASURES LOST: A fire on October 31 destroys the roundhouse and shops of Iowa interurban Waterloo, Cedar Falls & Northern. The blaze claims four locomotives, a streetcar, and two treasures from the heyday of electric railways: open-platform parlor-observation cars 101 and 102. Soon, the Cedar Valley Road became the all-diesel Waterloo Railroad, a joint IC-Rock Island property.

PIGGYBACK COMING ON STRONG: New York Central announces fast dedicated trains for hauling truck trailers; rival PRR quickly follows suit. Other roads jumping on the piggyback bandwagon: Lehigh Valley.

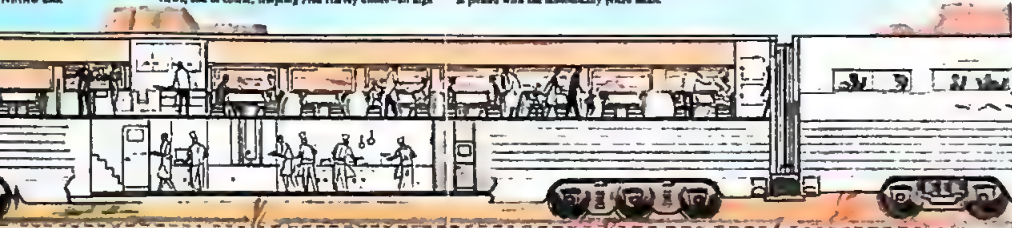


By Robert S. McGonigal

use style
NIGHT CAR

Dining is one of your biggest thrills and greatest pleasures of your 12 Capitan trip. You enjoy soft music, magnificent views, and of course, scrumptious Fred Harvey dishes—all high

above the noise of the kitchen below. 40 passengers can be served at one sitting in this spacious dining car and everyone is pleased with the exceptionally good meals.



CLASSIC TRAINS COLLECTION



H. REID

GREAT BLACK HOPE: Alone among the Class 1 roads, coal-hauling Norfolk & Western remains committed to steam. Hoping to combine the efficiencies of electric transmission with the advantages of coal, N&W receives from Baldwin-Westinghouse an immense steam-turbine-electric locomotive. No. 2300, the *Jawn Henry*, is powerful (4500 h.p.), but costly to build. Mass production might have driven down first cost, but no other roads are interested. Seen working at Christianburg, Va., in July '54, *Jawn* died early, an orphan.

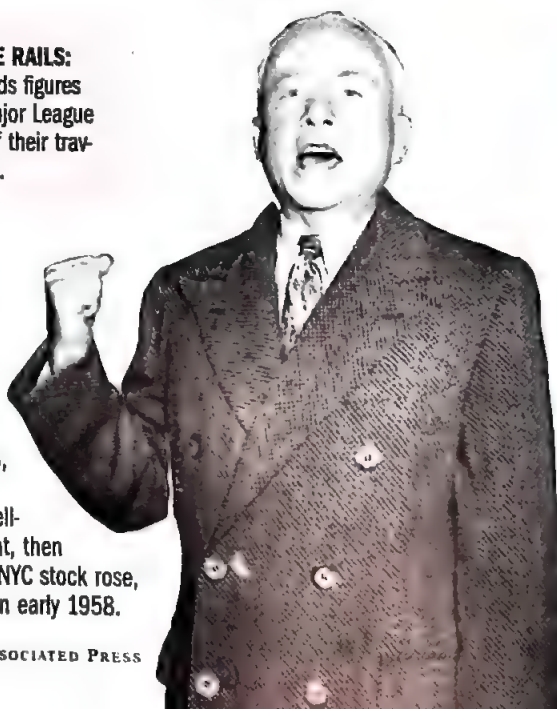
THE NATIONAL PASTIME RIDES THE RAILS:

The Association of American Railroads figures that for the 1954 season the 16 Major League Baseball clubs will do 90 percent of their traveling—some 200,000 miles—by train.

THE FIGHTING R. R. YOUNG:

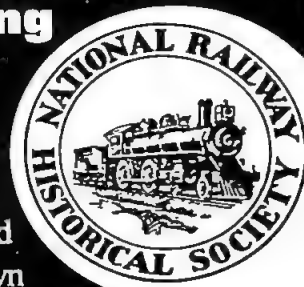
Perhaps the biggest story of 1954 takes place not on the high iron but in the boardroom. On January 19, Chesapeake & Ohio Chairman (and rail-industry gadfly) Robert R. Young resigns his C&O post to launch an all-out effort to gain control of the New York Central, in which he is the largest individual stockholder. Young succeeds after a well-publicized tussle with NYC management, then appoints Alfred Perlman as president. NYC stock rose, then fell, and Young took his own life in early 1958.

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The Williamsport shifter fuel feud

DURING HIS 45-YEAR CAREER as a Pennsylvania Railroad engineer, my father, Oscar P. ("O.P.") Orr, had many memorable experiences. One occurred in 1937 at Williamsport, Pa., on a yard job he had just bumped onto in order to be close to home. The experience demonstrated how the sense of humor of some railroad men could spin out of control.

Soon after O.P. started his new duties, he and his fireman were summoned to the yardmaster's office. The yardmaster presented them with a message he had received from the superintendent's office. The subject was unnecessary engine smoke at the east end of the freighthouse. Several phone calls had been received from the irate owner of a gasoline service station situated on the southwest corner of Hepburn Street, next to the railroad crossing. The yardmaster explained that he was only conveying the message received and that this discussion was not to be construed as a reprimand, but from now on they were to avoid caus-

ing an excess amount of smoke when working in this area.

After leaving the office, O.P. and his fireman discussed the matter but agreed that their locomotive, a B6 0-6-0, was not a smoky engine, and that if they were guilty they hadn't been aware of the excess smoke. Between them they determined that usually before pulling a cut out of one of the freighthouse tracks—sometimes 30 or more cars—a few shovelfuls of coal would be placed in the firebox in order to get a full head of steam. Because they occupied the single-track main, and also blocked three major streets leading in and out of downtown Williamsport, all the cutting moves had to be made as expeditiously as possible, therefore requiring lots of steam. And enough steam could be generated only by putting coal in the firebox. That was probably when the B6 exhausted more than a little smoke.

For the next few days the fireman abided by the yardmaster's request, and the service station owner was evidently pacified, because to the best of

their knowledge, the railroad had received no more smoke complaints. This truce, however, was short-lived.

Without consulting O.P., the fireman came up with a solution to reduce smoke and still keep the boiler hot. While they were parked beside the loading dock, under the overhanging roof of the freighthouse, the fireman got off onto the platform, which was level with the deck on the B6, and began gathering pieces of timber that had been used to shore up loads in the boxcars. Upon reboarding the engine, he arranged them on one side of the coal pile.

O.P. didn't regard that as anything out of the ordinary, for crew members often piled discarded boards and timbers on the engine and tender for use when off-duty. One brakeman once gathered enough of this material to construct a barn on his farm. O.P. was aware that the fireman had come back on board, but he didn't pay any atten-

Emitting a moderate amount of smoke, PRR 0-6-0 4027 shifts cars at Williamsport, Pa., in 1950.



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tion to what he was doing, because he was looking back for the conductor's signal to pull the drag out of the freight-house.

Just before O.P. got the signal, the fireman came over, and announced, "Oscar, I'm firing with wood instead of coal. That'll keep the smoke down." O.P. didn't say anything as he started pulling the cars out. "See that, Oscar?" the fireman said, "There's hardly any smoke. It's working."

Out of curiosity, O.P. looked up at the stack and was alarmed to see a shower of sparks flying out, and increasing with every exhaust. Soon a solid stream of red hot material was emitted. At this he told the fireman to take a look at the stack and see how well his brilliant idea was working now. "If you don't set that gas station on fire," O.P. said, "you'll probably blow it up!"

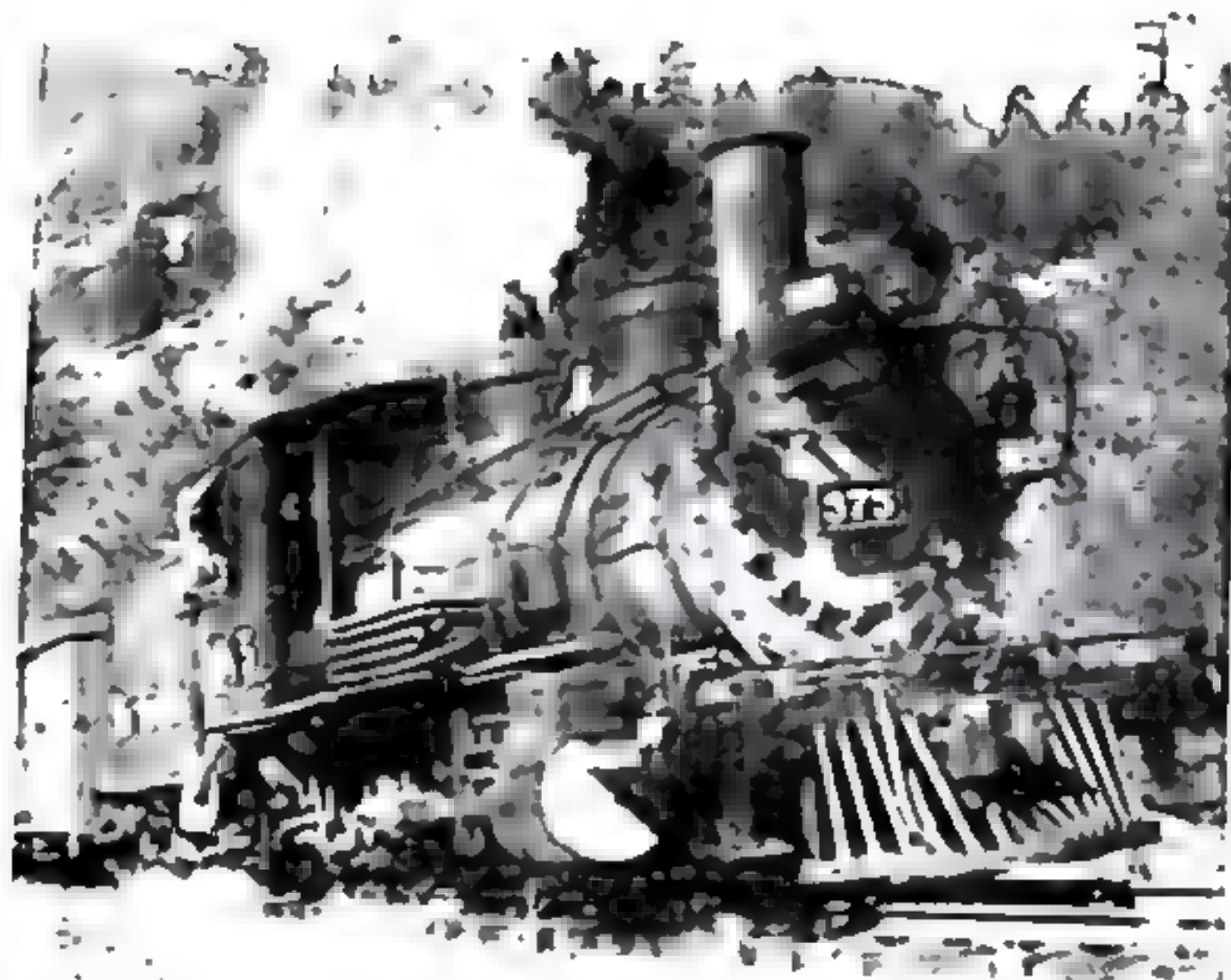
The fireman's reaction was just the opposite of what O.P. expected. He roared with laughter, exclaiming, "Oscar, that looks better than the fireworks they have on the Fourth of July!"

With the 0-6-0 working hard, the shower of sparks persisted until they were near Market Street, at which time O.P. shut off. He instructed the fireman to cover his wood fire with coal before they started cutting cars. Enough sparks had been discharged to start fires anywhere along this three-block area. He also told him, "We're probably both going to be given time off to think about your idea to cut down on smoke. I'll bet the phones are ringing off the hooks about now. At least we'll have an opportunity to talk to the superintendent when he calls us in on the carpet."

After a few days their fears abated. No one, it seemed, had seen the display of sparks other than the crew members, and nothing was ever heard from the upper offices. But the fireman had hardly given up his shenanigans. Coming out of the freight-house with a string of cars, the fireman pointed out a pile of tires lying on an outside platform that ran along Fifth Street. Saying some of them might fit his automobile, he dropped off to examine them after the cutting procedure was finished. Three of the tires suited him, and O.P. watched as he

Gunnison

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The Way It Was

brought them over to the engine and threw them on the deck. The tires didn't appear to be too healthy, but O.P. didn't question his selections.

Receiving a signal from the conductor, O.P. backed the B6 into the freight-house and coupled to another string of cars. As usual, he leaned out the cab window to look to the rear for the go-ahead motion from the conductor. When the signal was given, he released the independent brake, turned on the bell, opened up on the throttle, and, when he turned around, saw the entire area on his side enveloped in a pall of dense, black smoke. His suspicions were confirmed when he got a whiff of the smoke. It smelled like burning rubber, and he realized then that the fireman had squeezed the just-salvaged tires into the firebox, again while O.P. was pre-occupied watching for signals.

A light breeze had carried the black cloud right over the service station, completely obscuring it. But the worst of the episode was just beginning. Each exhaust lifted this dense smoke higher, and it started drifting directly

toward downtown Williamsport.

This prank not only amused the fireman, it had him convulsing in uproarious laughter. He was laughing so hard it looked like he was going to fall out of the gangway. In between spasms he blurted out, "Look at that, Oscar. That S.O.B. running the service station turned us in for a little coal smoke, so I decided to show him some real smoke for a change!"

The black smoke continued to belch out of the stack until they were in the vicinity of Pine Street. The tires were consumed faster than the wooden timbers, and the fire started burning clean. Realizing what the outcome of this incident could be, O.P. told the fireman, "Somehow you fail to consider how serious your monkeyshines are. As soon as some of the city officials find the business district fouled up with this cloud of rubber smoke, someone will be sent out here to investigate, and when they find out it came from our engine, we'll see a flock of Company men down here. We'll be lucky if they don't can us both."



CLRTIS W. LAW PHOTO; JIM SHAUGHNESSY COLLECTION

Caught in the act

His fears again were unfounded. No one even came near them, nor did they ever hear from any Company officials. But the fireman's attempt to agitate the service station proprietor failed once more.

The vendetta the fireman had with the gas station owner seemed to pass away, but not entirely. In the days that followed, O.P. occasionally noticed that an excessive amount of smoke would roll out of the stack while the B6 was laying in on the freight house tracks and the wind was blowing in the right direction. No other warnings about the smoke problem were ever received. O.P. decided the proprietor had probably given in, perhaps concluding that complaining didn't bring about the results he wanted. —John W. Orr

This story was excerpted from the book Set Up Running, by John W. Orr, published by the Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001. Used with permission.

My summer at 'Tac Harbor'

THE YEAR WAS 1966; I was 19 years old and starting my second summer working on the Great Lakes. This year I was called to be a deckhand on the *Leon Falk Jr.* of the Hanna fleet. At 730 feet overall, she was one of the largest boats on the Great Lakes, and could haul 26,000 long tons of iron ore. The *Falk* was still relatively new, having been converted into a bulk carrier from a World War II ocean tanker in 1962.

I enjoyed sailing. It not only meant good money, but a chance to see the various ports and railroads. I was looking forward to what the summer would bring. After boarding the *Falk* in Cleveland, I discovered she was in a triangular trade: Cleveland to Taconite Harbor, Minn., to Indiana Harbor, Ind., to Escanaba, Mich., and back to Cleveland.

Of these ports, Escanaba was interesting because of Chicago & North Western's wooden ore dock and fleet of Fairbanks-Morse H16-66's. Indiana Harbor wasn't too bad either; it offered

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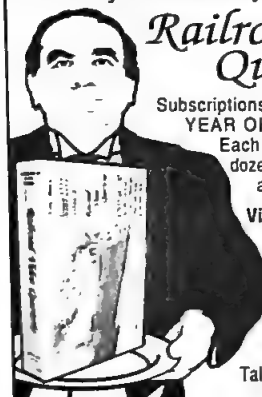
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ERIC HIRSIMAKI

the New York Central, Baltimore & Ohio, Elgin, Joliet & Eastern, and Indiana Harbor Belt. I even managed to photograph a Gulf, Mobile & Ohio coal train there. However, Taconite Harbor, "Tac Harbor" to most sailors, was perhaps the most interesting of all.

It is about as desolate a place on the lakes as you can find. Carved out of Lake Superior's rugged North Shore in the mid-1950's, its sole function was to provide a place to load the Erie Mining Company's taconite pellets into lakeboats. The pellet plant was 75 miles inland at the mine, so an industrial railroad hauled the pellets to the dock. Aside from a general store a couple of miles away at a "place" called Shroeder, there was nothing for miles and miles but the Great North Woods.

It wasn't this desolation that I remember most; it was how we handled the boat. All lakers entered the man-made harbor through the main en-

face, and running the engines "slow ahead." A cable on the port side helped keep it in place. As the *Falk* got perpendicular to the dock, we'd let go of the cable, reel it back on board, and change it to the starboard side so it could keep the bow positioned while it helped pull us around. After being tied up, the boat was loaded by shuttle conveyors that came out of a dock wall. They could move laterally across the boat to distribute the pellets evenly in the cargo hold.

Turning the boat was the most memorable part of the operation for me. The problem was, you were working on a four-foot-wide dock apron. At the water's edge was a piece of rail to keep you from slipping into the harbor. Behind you was a vertical concrete wall with only a pipe railing to grab onto. Since there were usually four of us, three deckhands and a deckwatch, it made things a bit crowded, particular-

Five F9's, one wearing Erie Mining's then-new yellow livery, ease an ore train over the unloading area of the Taconite Harbor dock in July 1966.

drag on the rocky harbor bottom.

As a deckhand it was my lot in life to turn the boat. However, I was promoted to deckwatch that summer and began working the 12-to-4 watch each morning, and afternoon. Thus, if the *Falk* arrived at 1 p.m., I would (theoretically) be able to watch the operation from the deck. Or so I thought.

As it turned out, we always arrived 1) during my watch; 2) as I was going on watch, or 3) as I was going off watch. It was my fate to be on the dock every time. This led to some overtime, but I would've preferred to watch and photograph the operation at least once. Who would have thought that over a dozen straight visits to Tac Harbor would result in my working every time?

from about two miles offshore while we waited for another boat to finish loading. Frustration. Once, however, while still a deckhand, I was able to photograph the 3 p.m. train on a sunny day. Since there weren't a lot of photographic opportunities from the boat, I went inside the loop.

The sun was right, the train came, and I managed to get a nice sequence of photos as it crept slowly across the top of the dock. It unloaded without stopping and dumped the pellets into specific bins above the shuttle conveyors. It was an impressive, efficient operation accomplished through the use of rubber tires on the cars that could open and close the bottom doors. Sections of rail on the dock were raised, and lowered as needed so the tires could turn on them, and actuate the doors. The train simply went around the loop, and returned to the plant for reloading.

Summer eventually ended, and I went back to more plebeian tasks like school. Nevertheless, I'll always remember my summer at Tac Harbor. With the news that Erie Mining successor LTV Steel is to shut down its railroad and dock in 2001, I treasure the memories even more. —Eric Hirsimaki

Late fall encounter at Georgetown Junction

IT WAS ESPECIALLY BEAUTIFUL, that fall of 1964. That year, the Indian summer, so typical of the mid-Atlantic states, seemed to stay a little longer than usual. It was a good time to watch and photograph trains.

For me, there were always the trains. I grew up in Silver Spring, a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C., barely a mile from the Baltimore & Ohio's Metropolitan Branch—the busy steel thruway which thrust westward to meet the Old Main Line at Point of Rocks. Living so close to the tracks, I was never out of earshot of the heavy coal drags and the "Time Saver" and "Sentinel" redball freights that banged through behind heavy steam and early diesel power. And, of course, there were still the numerous no-name, workaday

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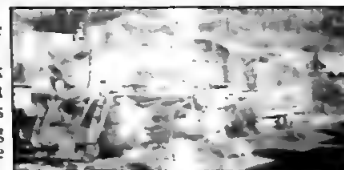
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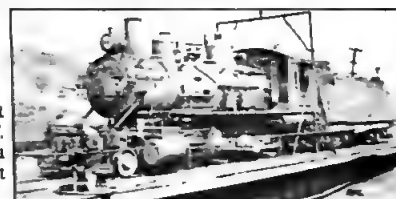
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passenger locals, intermingled with the sleek, long-distance expresses with names like *Capitol Limited*, *Columbian*, *National Limited*, *Shenandoah*, *Ambassador*, and *Diplomat*. They were a presence that, like the beautiful fall I remember, seemed destined never to go away.

For the train-struck little boy that I was, the B&O was a friend I felt would always be there. And as I grew up, one thing had not changed. There was still something beautiful about the sight of a train.

In the fall of 1964, I still lived near the B&O and the trains continued rolling past. But by this time, steam had gone. The railroad's great fleet of limiteds was shrinking. The through Pullmans to California and Texas, once interchanged at Chicago and St. Louis with trains named *Super Chief*, *Eagle*, and *Texas Special* no longer ran. Yet the Metropolitan Branch was still a showcase of trains.

There was one Sunday of that fall when, with 35mm camera in hand, I walked along the B&O at Georgetown Junction, waiting for trains. The junction was where the Georgetown Branch, a meandering 12-mile industrial spur, joined the Metropolitan. Six days a week, it hummed with activity as little switchers or occasional road power would shove boxcars, gondolas, and hoppers into and out of the grimy industrial park near the main line, or down to the Georgetown waterfront along the Potomac River. But this was Sunday, and all the Georgetown Branch had to offer was a lone covered hopper, slumbering the afternoon away on a rusty, weedgrown siding.

Not much was happening along the Metropolitan Branch when I got there on that late afternoon, but as the hands of my watch approached 5:30, I knew that would soon change. If the *Capitol* was on schedule, it would just be stopping at the red-brick Silver Spring station to take on additional passengers, mail, and express for its overnight dash to Chicago. Only a couple of miles east



PAUL SEIDENMAN

was usually brief, and that afternoon was no different. B&O's flagship would be on time.

In the distance I could detect the faint roar of the *Capitol's* locomotives, nearly always four EMD E units, and usually in an A-B-B-A lash-up. The great train would approach Georgetown Junction from around a long curve, and for me, the best place to capture it with my camera was from a spot at grade level, just a little west of where the Georgetown Branch joined the main. I knelt down and waited, ready to deploy the camera's hair trigger as the roar of the *Capitol's* diesels announced the train's imminent appearance. Then, the sleek blue, gray, and gold E8 abruptly appeared, canting into the curve, its golden headlight glaring in sharp contrast to the soft light of the late fall day.

I hit the trigger on my camera. The four E's blasted through with a deep-throated crescendo that all but shook the ground. Lowering my camera, I watched the passage of the great liner, no longer all-Pullman, but still a class act. Flashing by in a haze of dust and

Canting grandly to the gentle curve, E units break the quiet of a late fall day as they roar through Georgetown Junction with B&O's *Capitol Limited*.

Scioto, *Allegheny*, *Youghiogheny*; and finally a blunt-end sleeper-lounge-observation. With an excuse-my-dust arrogance, the *Capitol Limited* raced westward with no time for Georgetown Junction.

In less than a minute, the red marker lights and the *Capitol Limited* tail sign disappeared from view. In the distance, I heard the lead locomotive's air horns blow for the Forest Glen crossing. The sound faded, and soon all indications that the *Capitol* had been there that day were gone.

The beautiful Indian summer of 1964, like the *Capitol Limited* of that time, also passed away, as did the years. Today, the great Baltimore & Ohio Railroad is gone, and the trains along the Metropolitan Branch are operated by CSX Transportation, commuter carrier MARC, and Amtrak. Georgetown Junction is only a name, as the branch line to the Georgetown waterfront was torn up years ago. The

Junction. But I still have the photograph—albeit a little faded—of the *Capitol Limited* racing past on a beautiful late Sunday afternoon in an autumn like few I had seen before or since. And I remember. —Paul Seidenman

Close call for the Scout

I HIRED OUT IN 1944 with the Santa Fe as an agent/operator apprentice and in August was assigned to the agent/operator pool. In about a year I was 26th up from the bottom of the list, so I was able to successfully bid on some openings.

One night in about 1946, I was working relief on second trick (4 p.m.-midnight) at East Tower in Amarillo, Texas. Located about a mile east of the Santa Fe station at the lower end of the business district, East Tower protected the crossings of the Fort Worth & Denver and the Rock Island with Santa Fe's main line. East had no communication with the FW&D or RI dispatchers, so approaching trains simply called for clearance by locomotive whistle signals.

The track layout was such that an approaching train in either direction on any of the three roads could be easily seen, so clearance was normally granted before the train was close enough to request the clearance. The interlocking plant was normally aligned for the Santa Fe, so the job consisted of reporting the passing of eastbound trains to the dispatcher. That was his way of knowing that an eastbound had entered his dispatching district, and of keeping a record of all passing Santa Fe trains. There was no train-order function at the tower as the Santa Fe was double track to Pampa, 55 miles to the east.

Near the end of my trick on the night in question, I saw the headlight of a westbound Santa Fe train in the distance. I figured it to be No. 1, the *Scout*, which was due in Amarillo about 11 p.m., so I made sure the signals were cleared for the crossing. It wasn't long before I heard the sound of a Rock Island 2-8-2, throttle back,



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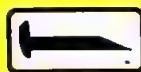
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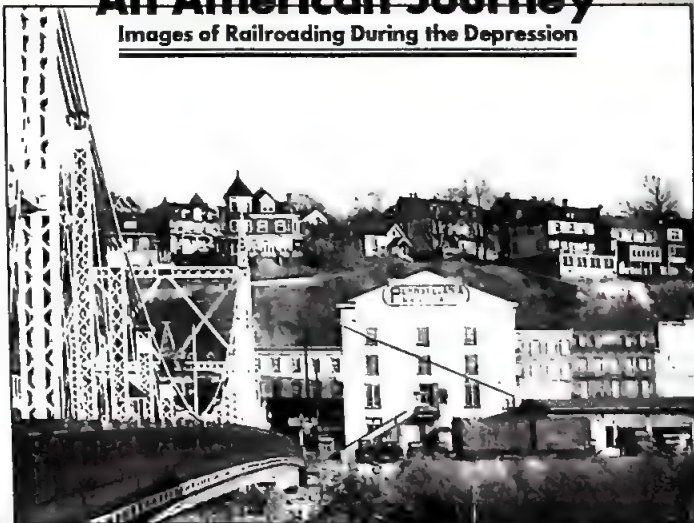
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The Way It Was

leaving the yard with a train. It didn't take much time for me to start getting anxious, as this train was getting closer and closer to the crossing, with the throttle still wide open. I thought to myself, "He has a red signal, why isn't he observing it?"

I checked the levers on the interlocking machine to be sure the derail device was in place. Meanwhile, the *Scout* was fast approaching the crossing, and so was the Rock Island train, its throttle still wide open. In less than a minute, just as the *Scout* blocked my view as it passed the tower, I saw sparks fly as the Rock Island locomotive hit the dirt—with throttle *still* wide open. The shower of sparks filled the night air much like sparks would come from a grinding wheel on metal. If that derail had not been there, the Rock Island train would have hit the *Scout* just behind its locomotive's tender, and East Tower would have been included in the wreckage.

You talk about a sigh of relief—seeing those sparks was indeed good for my eyes. I couldn't believe what I was seeing, and I was plenty concerned that something was not right. The entire event occurred in less than 5 minutes, but it was a very *long* 5 minutes! I didn't panic, but I'd be lying if I said I wasn't frightened! And I expect the Rock Island engine crew experienced the jolt of their lives as their engine hit the dirt.

After I was relieved at midnight, I

went out to the scene, and I stopped by again the next afternoon before going on duty. And as I remember, that Rock Island Mikado—No. 2682—was every bit as big and impressive as were our Santa Fe 4000-class heavy Mikes. The engine was still there, intact with its tender, which remained upright although the engine was listing a little. I was told that attempts had been made to rerail the engine and tender using two yard switchers, but with no success, and that heavy wrecking equipment was being brought in.

I didn't go back again, as my two-day relief tour was up, so I don't know how long it took to reopen the line. A couple of weeks later, a hearing was conducted at the Rock Island offices. The Santa Fe trainmaster and I were there, but more or less in a passive role. We answered a few questions, and that was about it.

The question of clearance was cut and dried. Once a route was cleared on the interlocking machine, to take it away required the clear signal to be reset, after which the route remained in a locked status for 4 minutes before the interlocking machine was internally reset. So, the only questions were whether the interlocking machine was working properly (I never heard it wasn't) and why the crew ignored the red signal.

I never heard the answer to that, either.
—Doyle Jackson



Live steam on the loose

DURING MY CAREER as an engineman on the Southern Pacific, I ran and fired locomotives carrying from 185 to 300 psi of superheated steam. The engine in this story was a 3700-class 2-10-2 which carried 200 psi of steam at 510 degrees F.

Every road locomotive had two water glasses, one on the engineer's side and one on the fireman's side, so both could see the level of the water over the crown sheet. The water glasses were made of special heavy glass to withstand the pressure and temperature of the water in the boiler.

Even so, it was not unusual for the glasses to crack or shatter, and spray water on the enginemen. It would burn you if the water and steam hit you. We all wore heavy gloves and heavy clothes to protect us from the leaking steam and hot water.

When a water glass broke, it usually didn't break all at once and we would have time to shut off the top and bottom valves. There were quite a few steam pipes that could leak or rupture on the boilerhead in front of the enginemen. The most dangerous was the manifold right in front of the fireman's

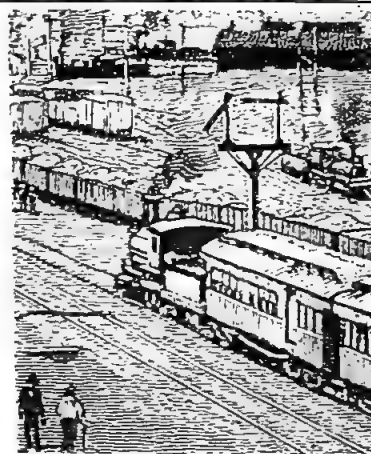
An SP 3700-series freight hog stands at the Sparks (Nev.) engine terminal in August 1948.



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The Way It Was

chest. The lubricator above and to the right of the engineer that used the working boiler pressure to oil the moving parts of the engine was also subject to failure from vibrations. The engineer kept a wary eye on that accessory. All steam-operated equipment in the cab had another set of shut-off valves on top of the rear of the boiler near the top of the cab. These were to shut off steam to replace broken pipes and other equipment in the cab.

Now come ride with me on an SP 3700-series 2-10-2 pulling 100 cars out of Carlin, Nev., westward toward Sparks. As we rounded the curve at Harney, something exploded in the cab. The noise was terrible. My eardrums were being crushed. I was instantly covered with hot water. The steam was so thick I couldn't see the fireman or any of our controls. I put the train into emergency and hit the deck. I knew the locomotive had not exploded or we would not have heard anything—we would be dead. How bad I was scalded I didn't know. When the train shuddered to a stop we bailed off the engine.

Once I was on the ground I could see I was just wet with hot water, a lot like spilling coffee in your lap. I climbed back up into the cab amid the noise of blowing steam to shut off the water glass I figured was broken. Back up in the cab I could see the pipe leading to the water glass was broken in two, just above the shut-off valve. Climbing up on the top of the boiler from the outside, where the shut-off valves were located, I felt around in the fog of the steam and the noise. I started turning off valves by feel until the noise stopped.

When I started to sit down in my seat I noticed my cap was in the middle of my seat. The stream of high-pressure steam had taken off my cap and pinned it to the rear wall of the cab. The paint and grease had been burned off the metal. When I sat back down on my seat I noticed the clean portion was just where my head would have been—if I hadn't been in the engineer's position of leaning a little bit out the cab window and my hand on the throttle as all steam "hogheads" did. Thus I was saved from having my head burned off my shoulders.

—William E. "Cannonball" McGee **I**

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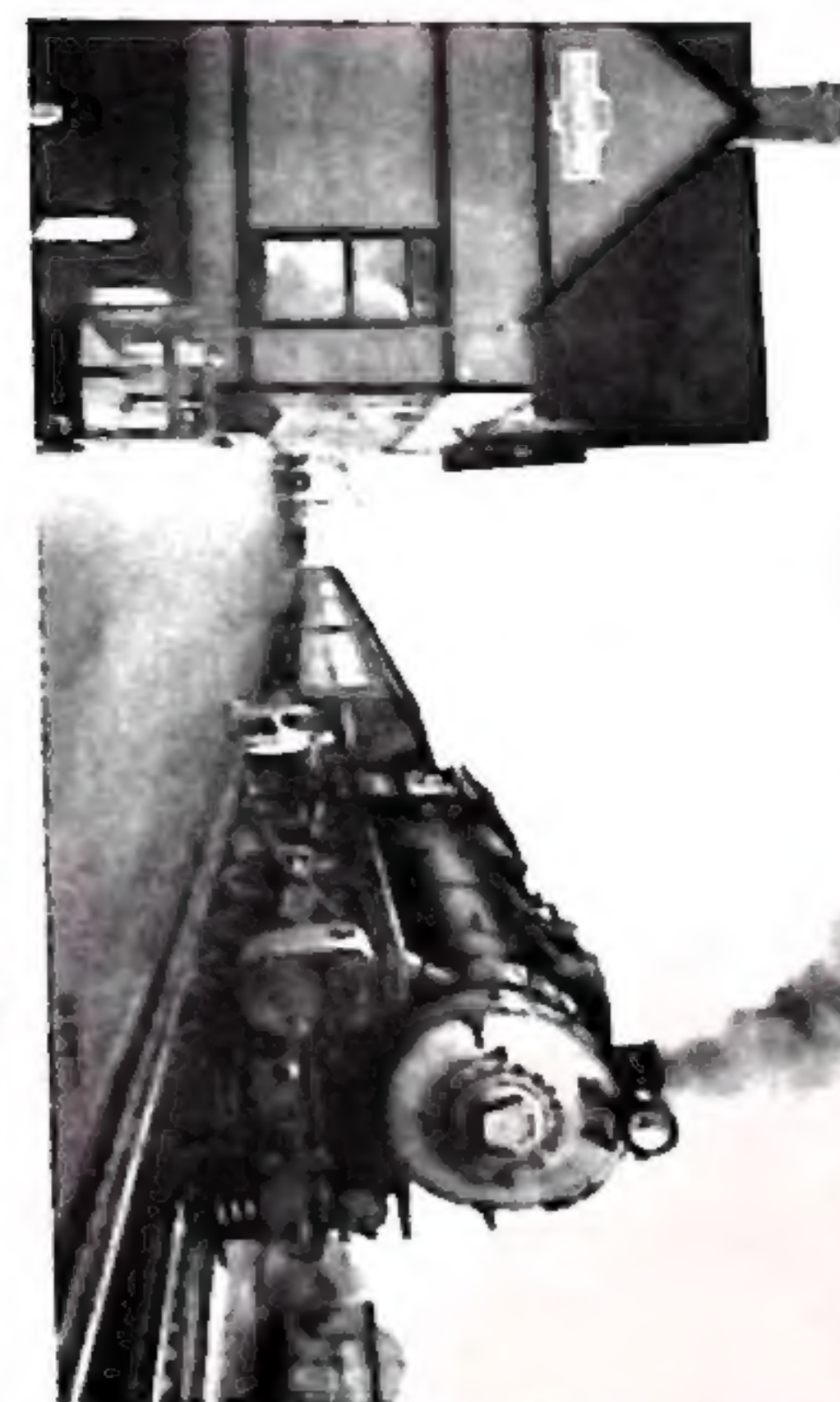
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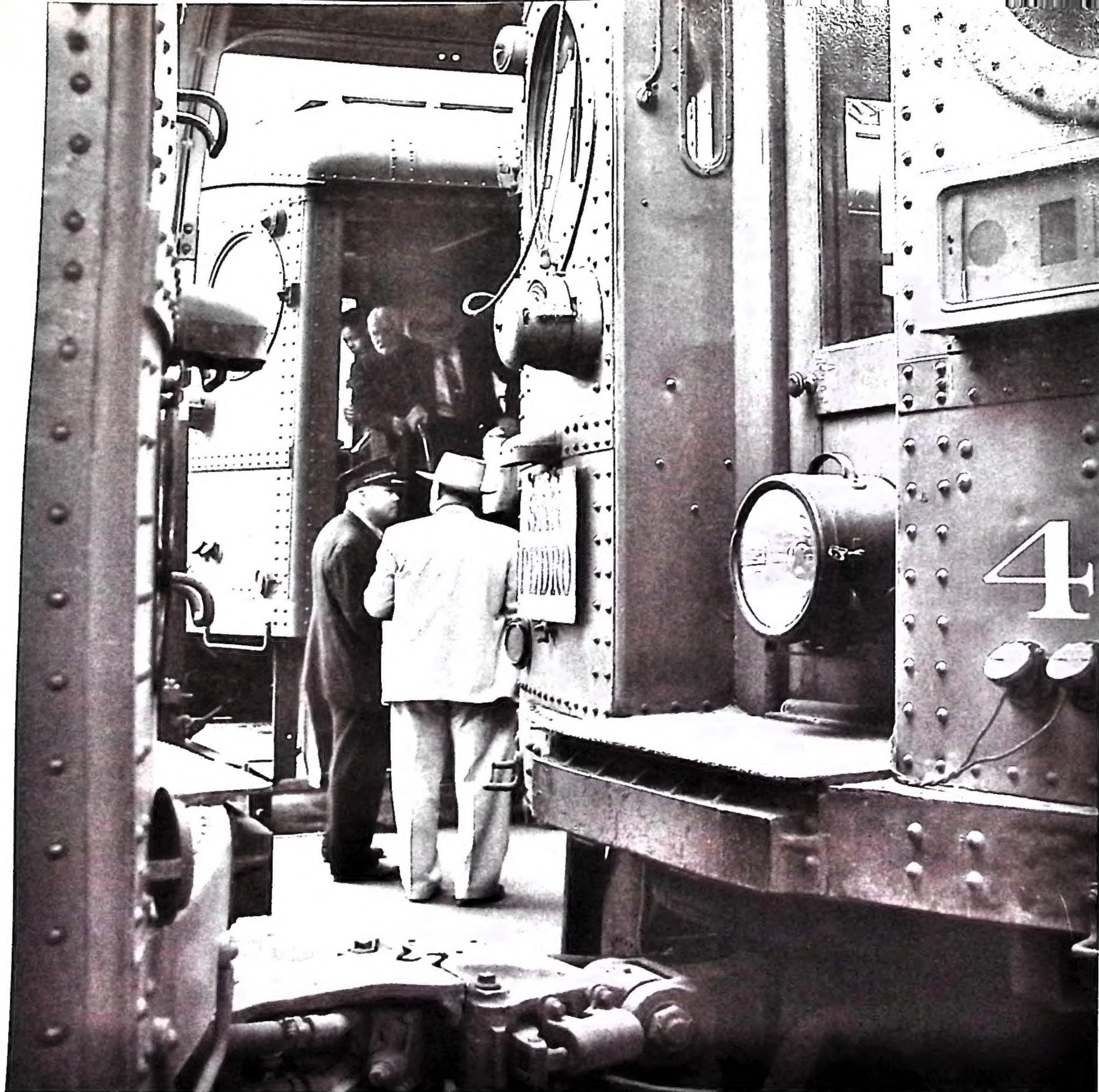
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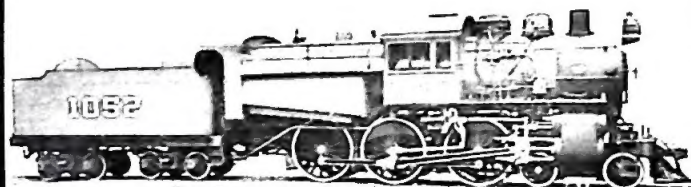
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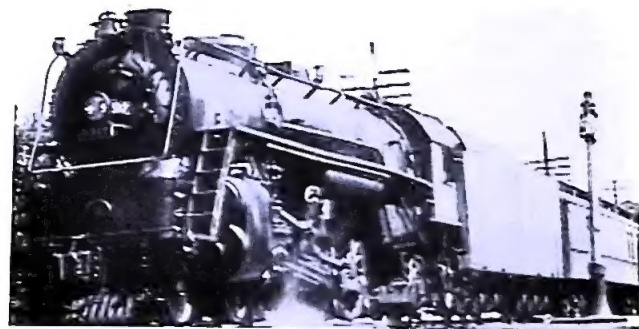


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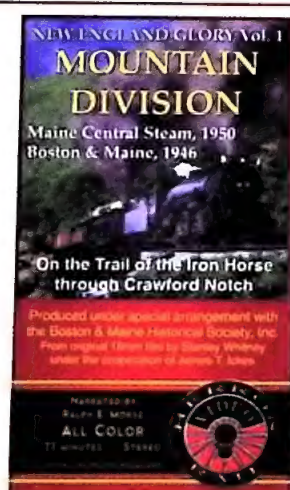
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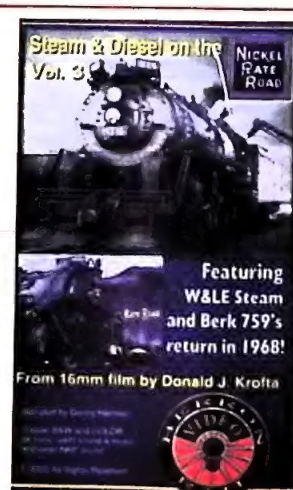
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